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Russia: Yeltsin To 'Fight for Victory' in 16 Jun Elections

LD2805164696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1629 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] UFA, May 28 (Interfax-Eurasia) — Boris Yeltsin told the Bashkortostan TV company that he would fight for a victory in the June 16 elections.

Yeltsin said in a program aired Tuesday that he is quite fit physically.

"I felt this in my tours of the country. I feel that I am strong. So I am not only fit for fighting, I am and will be fighting until I win. The name Boris means fight," he said.

The relations between the federal center and internal republics such as Bashkortostan and regions are now developing on a sound basis, he thinks.

The treaties and agreements between federal and regional authorities recognize the specifics of every region or internal republic and specify which problems are to be handled by them jointly and which, separately, Yeltsin said.

The treaty with Bashkortostan "has resolved numerous problems in our relations and gave the republic a latitude in tackling issues in areas where its rights must indeed be broad," he said.

Asked whether the division into very rich and very poor should be restrained in any way, Yeltsin said that the policy is to remove artificial restrictions on income growths.

What is needed now most urgently, he continued, is to increase the social orientation of the reform, enable active resourceful people to realize themselves while supporting pensioners, invalids, large families and children.

"Nobody has a right to deprive one of what is honestly earned. On the other hand, the rich are heavily taxed in every country of the world. For this reason the taxation services and the tax police have been told to ensure collection of taxes on high and especially super-high incomes," Yeltsin said.

The opposition is making a lot of noise over the destruction of Russian culture but quite a few people are unaware of the fact that not a single theater or museum or orchestra has been closed over the reform years but 48 new theaters and 100 new museums have been opened since 1991. Despite all the difficulties, the state has been and will be supporting culture, education, science and enlightenment, he said.

Russia: Yeltsin Talks With Pravoberezhnoye Residents

LD2805165296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1134 GMT 28 May 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY May 28 (Itar-Tass) — President Yeltsin has talked for some 40 minutes with residents of the village of Pravoberezhnoye and of nearby villages. "The land should not stand idle, it should work, and there are working hands to toil it," the President said. He asked people about what they need and ordered that two Don-1500 grain harvesters should be given to them.

Nizhniy Novgorod Governor Boris Nemtsov, who came to Chechnya together with Yeltsin, promised to send to Pravoberezhnoye five Gazel trucks.

When talking to the President, Pravoberezhnoye residents raised a question, which is of much importance for them: there are no production shops around, where women could be employed. Yeltsin suggested that a small clothing factory should be built near the village.

Raisa Anchuyeva, director of the local school, raised another problem: the local school is intended for 320 pupils, but the number of children attenting it is almost twice as large. Classes are overcrowded. Yeltsin assigned to the local government bodies to resolve this problem jointly with the authorities of the Chechen Republic and to build a new school in the village.

Village girls gave bread and salt to the President. Breaking the protocol, he asked them: "Do you bake the bread yourselves, or is it brought to the village?" The Pravoberezhnoye residents answered that part of the bread is brought, and another part is baked there. "If you bake bread, this means that peace has come, and this is great," Yeltsin said.

Russia: Yeltsin's Chechnya Trip May Help Win Over Waverers

MM2805161396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 May 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Teymuraz Mamaladze of IZVESTIYA Analysis Center: "True to His Word. Boris Yeltsin Visits Chechnya"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yeltsin in Chechnya is an event that has arrived sooner than anyone could have thought and has exceeded all expectations.

Yesterday Russian President Boris Yeltsin arrived in Mozdok at 1030 Moscow time, after which he set off by helicopter for Chechnya.

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On their approach to their destination airports, our correspondent Viktor Belikov was told at the Air Force Central Command Post, the presidential Tu-134 and helicopter were covered by army aircraft based in the area.

The president's lightning visit amid heightened security measures to the position of the 205th Motorized Infantry Brigade, stationed near the "Severnyy" airport, called to mind images of the past.

The silhouette of the August [1991] tank with the figure of the president of Russia standing on the armor has again pushed its way into the babel of Russian politics. Once again, as in the summer of 1991, Yeltsin has entered a battle that was seemingly lost right at the outset. If this analogy follows the same logical pattern to even the slightest extent, the result may also come in August: victory.

Once again, as almost five years ago, this personal victory for Yeltsin appears, at least today, to be a common victory for those who pinned their expectations and hopes on the Russian president in August 1991.

Everyone is entitled to their own interpretation of this extraordinary step, which came on the heels of another strong move by the president — his Moscow talks with Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, which culminated in the signing of an agreement on a cease-fire in Chechnya. To describe this explosive effort as an election trip would not be wrong. Carried out amid great personal risk, it in no way belittles the significance of this action — quite the contrary. Its "pre-June" political motives recede far into the background compared with the chances of peace, of an end to bloodshed, and of the release of the prisoners of the Caucasus held captive by this war. And of the release of Russia from a damaging Caucasus policy that almost led the country into an impasse.

The exchange of visits is a normal matter in political and diplomatic practice. However, it is difficult to recall an exchange of visits taking place in such extraordinary circumstances and at such a rapid pace. However, this is a case where the improvised nature of Yeltsin's actions and remarks, previously so depressing a quality, would not meet with universal condemnation.

However, information at IZVESTIYA's disposal does not make it possible to regard this "dash to the south" as an improvised game from scratch. The possibility of such a trip was discussed in Yeltsin's confidential conversations with people in his immediate entourage and with certain leaders of CIS countries long before he made public his intention to visit Chechnya. And the fact that he held his "ticket to Chechnya" in reserve for the period before the elections cannot serve as grounds for criticism: The strategy of such a campaign, including questions of security, presupposes an unerring choice of place and time for particular victorious steps.

Let us say, however, that by going to Chechnya Yeltsin has still not won the June elections. If it is permissible to speak of a gain, it is only from the viewpoint of the rather sizable section of Russian society which, having become disillusioned with the "post-August" Yeltsin, ahead of June was veering between the threat of Zyuganov's communist revenge and the submerged reefs of the lesser evil. Thanks to the courage of his two actions — the invitation of Z. Yandarbiyev to the Kremlin and the trip to Chechnya — he will presumably help waverers and the disillusioned to make their choice.

"We have one-man rule [yedinovlastiye] in our country," the president said in the Kremlin to his Chechen opposite number in response to the doubt he voiced regarding the federals' readiness to fulfill the agreement. The shortage of "one-man rule" along with excessive rivalry among situational corporate-group interests within power structures has cost Russia dear. Yeltsin's recent actions make it possible to hope for a long-awaited positive breakthrough in the "war of interests" in favor of Russia's true national and state interests. If the comment about "one-man rule" signifies an awakened determination on the president's part to be responsible not only for adopting decisions but also for strictly fulfilling them in full accordance with his aims, which express the will of the majority of Russians, then things are at long last moving in the right direction.

Yeltsin's 1,350-km flight from Moscow to Mozdok will presumably also make an impression in those quarters where circumstances and living conditions make people prize "military culture" above all, turning it into a cult of personal courage. There in Chechnya, in the Caucasus, where, in Yu. Tynyanov's words, the environment straightens your chest and prevents your back from bowing. At one time the best Russian people "introduced the mountains as their good friends" to their fellow travelers. So a good, albeit very brief, personal acquaintance with this region of his country is part of its president's duties.

The only pity is that this did not happen much earlier.

In conclusion, here is one little "Kremlin secret." The negotiation feast in the banqueting hall at the presidential residence took place without some prominent protagonists in the Russian-Chechen tragedy. In particular, Pavel Grachev was not there, which permitted some observers to assert that the defense minister has been sidelined from the settlement in Chechnya.

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However, as our correspondent Viktor Litovkin was able to establish, as the agreement was being signed in the Kremlin Grachev was flying to Chechnya in order to organize safe working conditions for his supreme commander in chief on the spot. According to one high-ranking Defense Ministry staffer, armed formations that are not under the control of any "one-man rule," which Yandarbiyev assured the president exists, have continued to operate in the republic even after the signing of the cease-fire agreement.

It is the main task of Pavel Grachev and his subordinates to protect the president from them during his stay in Groznyy. And although the leader of the military department himself repeatedly declared that he would not advise the president to fly to Chechnya since this would entail very great risk, the minister is now demonstrating his devotion to the supreme commander in chief by creating for him an image in conformity with this post and rank.

But Yeltsin himself did this better than he did by declaring in Groznyy: "The way is clear for peace in Chechnya."

Russia: Poll Shows Yeltsin Most Popular in Kaliningrad Region

LD2805164996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1108 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KALININGRAD, May 28 (Interfax/BNS) — An opinion poll held by the Kaliningrad Sociological Center among the adult population of the Kaliningrad region suggests that Russian President Boris Yeltsin was the most popular presidential candidate in the middle of May.

The opinion poll involved 1,130 respondents, the Baltic Fleet's newspaper Strazh Baltikiy reported Tuesday.

If the presidential elections had been held in the middle of May, writes the newspaper, Yeltsin would have been supported by 28 percent of the voters, leader of the Communist Party Gennadiy Zyuganov 26 percent, Yabloko party leader Grigoriy Yavlinksiy 12 percent, Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy 8 percent, retired General and Duma deputy Aleksandr Lebed 7 percent and renowned eye surgeon Svyatoslav Fedorov 3 percent.

Each of the other candidates would have received less than 3 percent of the votes.

Eighteen percent of the respondents were undecided and another 4 percent did not support any of the candidates.

One-third of the respondents who gave their preference to one of the candidates, said that their choice was not final and that on June 16 they might vote for another candidate.

The newspaper reports that in the opinion of the sociologists, the voter turnout on June 16 will be 70 to 75 percent.

Russia: Democratic Parties Confer in Yeltsin's Support

MK2805130496 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 28 May 96 p 3

[Report by Natalya Arkhangelskaya: "Specter of Communism Rallies Democrats"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A congresses of four parties and movements of right-wing orientation, held over this past weekend, completed the process of self-determination of Russian democrats with regard to the candidacy which they will support in the upcoming presidential election. The overall result is that six out of seven liberal-reformist party structures which took part in the December parliamentary elections, will gamble on President Yeltsin in June. The Yabloko movement alone has nominated its own candidate: its leader Yavlinskiy. [passage omitted]

The biggest of the party meetings held over the weekend was, perhaps, the congress of Russia's Choice [VR] — not to be confused with Gaydar's DVR [Russia's Democratic Choice], from which VR detached itself two years ago diverging from Gaydar supporters in particular on the view of the incumbent president. Today, there reigns in the movement an ideological harmony: The position of the leadership with regard to Yeltsin completely coincides with that of the regional organizations. One year ago, the movement even made attempts to join the newly created Russia Is Our Home, which, however, were hampered by VR's Gaydar etymology. Needless to say that, beginning from February, the movement has been working in contact with the Yeltsin [campaign] headquarters both in the center and in the regions.

On Saturday [25 May] the congress of Yeltsin's loyal supporters was honored by the presence of Sergey Filatov, chairman of the All-Russia Movement of Public Support for the President; and Aleksandr Livshits, the president's economic aide. The congress adopted an appeal to voters proposing to the democratic electorate to "rally around the single candidate: Yeltsin." The other presidential candidates were "asked to ponder the price of their participation in the election." The delegates decided against a direct call to withdraw their candidacies in favor of Yeltsin. Whereas the adoption of such a statement contained nothing unexpected, the second resolution of the VR congress can be called sensational. A decision was made on the start of a process

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uniting democratic organizations to form a single bloc. Concrete discussion of this will of course take place after the election, but some already volunteered. They are the Association of DPR [Democratic Party of Russia] Regional Organizations (those regional branches of the former "Travkin's party" which work for Yeltsin), NDR [Russia Is Our Home], and Forward, Russia!. A coordination committee created for solving the tasks of unification is made up of members of the leadership of the structures who were present at the congress.

Over the same weekend, there were congresses and conferences of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord (leader, Sergey Shakhray), the Forward, Russia! movement (leader, Boris Fedorov), and the Democratic Russia movement (Galina Starovoytova and Lev Ponomarev). Like Russia's Choice, they decided to support Boris Yeltsin in the election. Fedorov is confident of the current president's victory, and Shakhray intends to press into service his party and guarantee democratic control at the polling stations to counterbalance the Communists.

The aggregate electorate that swore allegiance to Yeltsin during these days alone comprises about 13 million voters. The appeals passed in recent party congresses are aimed at it. Members of the parties have made their choice: Those who have wanted to work for Yeltsin's victory are already doing so. It did not take party resolutions to do so. No resolutions were needed to Yabloko regional branches, a considerable part of which work for the presidential team despite Yavlinskiy's denials. An entire floor has been reserved from early May in President Hotel, which houses the president's campaign headquarters, for activists of friendly democratic parties.

Russia: Government 'Source' Says Zyuganov Means To Break With IMF

LD2805181896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1314 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Interfax) — Communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov's program means a break with Russia's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a source near the government told Interfax Tuesday.

The sixth section of Zyuganov's economic program, published Tuesday in a number of Moscow papers, states that in foreign economic relations there will be "a re-examination of the agreements which limit Russia's economic independence and her choice in choosing a model for development."

The second section states that "the agreements of the president and government with the IMF... unpardonably limit Russia's economic sovereignty and place the Russian economy to an extraordinary degree under the control of the IMF."

Saying that the current authorities are unable "to carry out the necessary change of direction in reforms," the program argues that in order to make these changes, they would have to "go against the primary interests of the ultra-rich comprador elite and powerful foreign patrons," the expert pointed out.

The Communist plan calls for government borrowing from the Central Bank, the end to the emission of government short-term obligations, a move away from the practice of lowering the budget deficit, and the introduction, if necessary, of a government monopoly on the export of strategic resources. All of these would violate the February 1996 agreement with the IMF under which Russia is to receive over $10 billion in loans over the next three years, the expert said.

Russia's ability to stick to these principles will also determine its eligibility for other foreign loans, including from the World Bank, and for the long-term (25-year) restructuring of Russia's foreign debt.

Russia: Officials Deny Zyuganov Claim That Statistics Are Withheld

MM2905085696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 May 96 p 1

[Report by Anatoliy Stepovoy under the "Politics in Personalities" rubric: "Zyuganov Does Not Know Because He Does Not Want To Know"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the Rostov Institute for Improving Teachers' Skills, when a member of the audience asked how and when Zyuganov intends to extricate the country from its economic difficulties, the contender avoided giving a specific answer. No one can give a realistic timetable at the moment, he said, because we do not know the actual production volumes or what proportion of property is in state hands. He said the government and the State Committee for Statistics are to blame for the Communists' lack of economic information, since, despite all requests, they are not providing the necessary information.

Viktor Konnov, the prime minister's press secretary, described Zyuganov's attack as unfounded. There have been no direct appeals to V. Chernomyrdin regarding this matter. Anyhow, it is not his job to dispatch statistical information, which can be easily obtained from the State Committee for Statistics if desired.

Valeriy Dalin, first deputy chairman of the State Committee for Statistics, told IZVESTIYA that his depart-

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ment has received no official requests from the Communists. Furthermore, prominent CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] figures like G. Seleznev and Yu. Maslyukov are on the official list of recipients of all statistics committee information supplied to the government and other state institutions.

As we can see, G. Zyuganov, who was caught out lying about textbooks, from which he claimed the democrats have removed Pushkin, Gogol, and other classics, has not calmed down and is continuing to use lies as a proven means of election propaganda and agitation.

Russia: Lebed Interviewed on Election Campaign

964F2262A Irkutsk SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH in Russian 21 May 96 p 2

[Interview with Aleksandr Lebed, candidate for president of the Russian Federation, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "Aleksandr Lebed: My Program Has To Be Explained to Everyone"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Aleksandr Ivanovich, how in your opinion is the election campaign going? What do you think of Yeltsin-Yavlinskiy and Yeltsin-Zyuganov coalitions?

[Lebed] I think that 100 million citizens of Russia will elect the president. It seems to some that the president should be elected by two persons or 13 persons, or 50 persons. These selected electors conduct negotiations among themselves and form alliances. That is the way it was in the Politburo of the Central Committee. There. 10-12 persons elected the general secretary on the sly, and afterwards made the people happy by reporting the name.

My physique does not permit me to participate in these games. I cannot flitter about—I did not learn how in 46 years, and now it is too late. It was difficult for me to make the decision to run for president, and I treat it seriously. Thus, they have their games, and I have mine. Let them scheme, but I will conduct my own election campaign.

All these games are bad in one way. People may finally become obsessed and decide they are being led by the nose. And then faith in the elections will be crushed. But the elections are the definitive method of legally changing the authorities, or of legally confirming their powers.

Thus, if things do not turn out for those who haggled—they enjoyed themselves, they calculated—they shed a tear.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Nevertheless, will a Yeltsin alliance with the democrats develop?

[Lebed] If they themselves do not know this today, this applies even more to me. It is clear that there are two groups in Yeltsin's circle. Some want to buy the votes of the Communists and are pushing Yeltsin toward an alliance with Zyuganov. They want the elections to be a sure thing—with one candidate. We have a strong tradition here. There is a basis for such an alliance—an alliance of today's and yesterday's nomenklatura.

The other group advises buying the votes of the democrats—it is pushing for an alliance with Yavlinskiy. The basis for alliance is weaker here—the nomenklatura around Yeltsin does not like Yavlinskiy. And there are fewer votes for Yavlinskiy than there are for Zyuganov, and he will demand a substantial payment—the post of prime minister.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Is what they are saying right: On one fine day you, they say, will remove your candidacy... Under what conditions?

[Lebed] I have a very poor imagination. I cannot imagine such conditions.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] A Lebed-Yavlinskiy-Fedorov triple alliance. Is this a reality or a myth?

[Lebed] Ask those who are talking about it. I said a long time ago that an alliance with three heads is a fire-breathing dragon. An interesting monster, but helpless at our latitudes. Yavlinskiy is conducting negotiations with the president, and I learn of them from television. I have other ideas about an alliance and partnership relations. Therefore, I am taking my own path.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Aleksandr Ivanovich, please give us a description of your main rivals.

[Lebed] Yeltsin is the most experienced. However, his strength lies not in his experience but in his tremendous desire for power. He has no equals here. He has courage, much more than the others. In my opinion he is awaiting 16 June with great sporting excitement.

Zyuganov is rather weak in a personal sense. The best thing for him is for the preelection race to go on without end. Then he will not have to answer for defeat, and he will not be held responsible in the event of victory. I think that he looks at the calendar, at the date of 16 June, with terror.

Zhirinovskiy is the most talented comedian in our country.

Yavlinskiy is a capable person. But sometimes you think—exactly what is he capable of? There is too much

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of him, and my eyes are dazzled. Only Yavlinskiy is for a triple alliance with Lebed and Fedorov, the second—for a coalition with Yeltsin, and it is generally not clear what the third is for. My eyes see triple.

That briefly is what I think about the contenders.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] But what would you say about candidate Lebed?

[Lebed] What is being said about him—and so everything is apparent. It is written all over my face...

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Then we will put it another way. What do you think are the most important qualities for a president?

[Lebed] A conscience. Common sense. A will. Health.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Are you satisfied with the way your campaign is going?

[Lebed] No. I am dissatisfied.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] Why? Who is to blame for this?

[Lebed] Weather conditions are always to blame. But in this case I blame myself. I am still unable to really bring my program to the people.

The campaign is going poorly, because the results are still weak. It is not important whether the sociologists are lying or not, and, in any case, I have a low rating. But if we were able to clearly explain my program to the people, my rating would become much higher. My program is suitable for a large majority of people. It has no demagogy or wild ideas, there are no ideological stamps or "isms," and there are no unrealistic promises. I talk only about what I can fulfill. I talk about that which can be done in Russia today. And this is exactly those things that are necessary to everyone. Civil peace, order in the state, an opportunity to earn an honest living, reliability, and truth. I know that I can give this to the people. It remains to explain this in such a way that people understand that I am telling them the truth. If 7 percent are ready to vote for me today, this means that I succeeded in explaining it to 7 percent, if 10 percent—this means that I succeeded in explaining it to 10 percent. I must continue to explain.

[SOVETSKAYA MOLODEZH] To what percentage of the voters do you hope to explain your program by 16 June?

[Lebed] My program concerns everyone. Everyone needs it. So it is necessary to explain it to everyone...

Russia: KRO Convenes Unscheduled Congress 25-26 May

MK2805125796 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 May 96 p 1

[Report by Yuriy Gorun: "Yeltsin Greets KRO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "Congress of Russian Communities" public political movement — whose acronym KRO is closely linked with Yuriy Skokov, Aleksandr Lebed, Dmitriy Rogozin, and Sergey Glazyev — held an unscheduled congress on 25 and 26 May. Its defeat at the parliamentary elections caused a hiatus in the KRO's public and political activity and turned some of the regional organizations into "interest" clubs. The Yaroslavl organization, has launched itself into unsanctioned activity; there they are drumming up and giving support to the candidate Bryntsalov. This situation, which essentially means the death of the centralized all-Russia organization and the erosion of the ideology to which they attach great importance in the KRO, could in no way please the Moscow leadership of the congress. Today, Dmitriy Rogozin believes that the 0.7 percent of the vote the KRO was short at the parliamentary elections, the margin needed to be able to clear the coveted 5-percent hurdle, "disappeared" as a result of vote rigging and intrigues organized by the group of Yuriy Skokov, former chairman of the national council of the KRO. There is nothing surprising about the fact that Yuriy Skokov was not on hand at the recent unscheduled congress.

About 30 regional organizations expressed no confidence in the KRO's National Council, all regional organizations had been informed of the congress, and it took place and was a success, something even its organizers seemed to have doubted until the last moment. The first day of the congress was behind closed doors, and, in addition to sharp ideological statements, there were some resolute organizational changes made during this meeting; the rules were amended. Officially, this was done in connection with the new Russian Federation law "On Public Associations," but actually it was done in order to end the dual power within the movement, which consisted of the positions of chairman of the executive committee and chairman of the National Council.

Everything came out as contemplated: Dmitriy Rogozin received the delegates' support for all his initiatives, including, for example, the creation of an absolutely new party.

The new party, whose founding meeting took place on the next day, "opened" to observers and those invited, will be called the "Russian People's Party [KRO]."

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Dmitriy Rogozin was elected leader of the new party. Now, in the shape of the new party, the KRO would be able to create primary cells, and to form sources of finance. Rogozin believes that such a "strong organization of confederates will become reality and will strive for one goal: to defend the interests of the Russian people."

The idea that the Russian nation is the one that makes Russia a great power [derzhavoobrazuyushchaya] — and hence it is necessary to campaign precisely for the interests of Russians both inside Russia and outside it — is the main motif and theme of the KRO's political statement.

The criticism formulated in the statement aimed at "radical democrats" is so sharp and no-holds-barred that it becomes clear that the renewed KRO cannot have any compromise with the current authority. All the more surprising then sounded the "cordial greetings to the delegates of the unscheduled congress" from President Yeltsin. "One of the main priorities of the Russian state is protection of our fellow countrymen who live abroad. In accordance with my edict, and a special decree of the government, there have been approved guidelines of state policy in this sphere," says the president's greetings to the congress. The [KRO's] own presidential candidate — Aleksandr Lebed — also forwarded greetings to the congress, thereby somewhat disappointing the delegates, who had expected to see him on the platform next to Rogozin and Glazyev. The leadership of the renovated KRO is confident that Lebed can hope for 17 percent of the vote in the first round.

Dmitriy Rogozin explained the motives for supporting Aleksandr Lebed at a press conference: This candidate is valued for the fact that he has never betrayed his ideals and he would not withdraw his candidacy in anyone's favor. Sergey Glazyev added: ".... It is absurd now to haggle over positions in Yeltsin's government, because they mean nothing. It is not ministers who rule but clans, and there are no clans behind Lebed."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA has come to learn from well-informed sources in Yuriy Skokov's entourage that the attitude of the former chairman of the National Council to the congress can be characterized as sitting tight. He views the present congress simply as a sort of illegitimate "get together" and those who held it as divisive, proceeding from political expediency and personal ambitions. The "real" congress will take place in the second part of the year, as planned. For the time being, Yuriy Skokov does not intend to either make any sharp statements or attempts to take the initiative.

Russia: Seleznev Signs Duma Decree on Holding Elections on Time

MM2805132396 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 May 96 p 3

[Russian Federation State Duma Decree No. 359-II "On Holding Russian Federation Presidential Elections at the Constitutional Time," signed by G.N. Seleznev, chairman of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma in Moscow on 17 May 1996 — from the 'Documents' section]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma notes that of late the Russian and foreign mass media have with increasing frequency begun to publish opinions and statements by certain officials regarding the necessity and possibility of postponing the Russian Federation presidential elections. In the process voters are being scared by the claim that the 16 June 1996 election results will prompt acute civil confrontation.

Such articles and statements aimed at disrupting the elections constitute a most flagrant breach of the Russian Federation Constitution, which lays down that the people are the sole source of power in the Russian Federation, the supreme direct expression of which is referendums and free elections, and no one can arrogate power in the Russian Federation.

Russian citizens link their future and the future of Russia itself with the results of the Russian Federation presidential elections. The holding of the elections at the legally prescribed time is a factor in the stability and unity of a civil society. To postpone the Russian Federation presidential elections at the very height of the election campaign would set a dangerous precedent and could result in the destabilization of society and grave consequences for the whole country.

Mindful of the above, the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma decrees that:

1. The need to hold the Russian Federation presidential elections at the prescribed time is hereby reaffirmed.

2. The Russian Federation president is hereby advised as the guarantor of the Russian Federation Constitution and human and civil rights and freedoms to take the requisite steps to prevent the disruption of the Russian Federation presidential elections of 16 June 1996.

3. The Russian Federation Central Electoral Commission is hereby asked to constantly monitor legality during the preparations for and holding of the Russian Federation presidential elections, to ensure glasnost in the activity of electoral commissions and the objective establishment of the election results in full accordance

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with the federal law "On Elections of the President of the Russian Federation."

[signed] G.N. Seleznev, chairman of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly State Duma

[dated] Moscow, 17 May 1996

Russia: Duma Protests Rejection of Bill on Election Monitoring

MM2805130196 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 May 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "In the State Duma" — from the 'Documents' section]

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Duma has adopted an appeal to Russian Federation President B.N. Yeltsin regarding the Federation Council's rejection of the federal law adopted by the Duma "On Public Supervision of the Conduct of the Elections and Openness and Glasnost in Summing Up the Results of the Vote."

Considering the upper chamber's decision incompetent, Duma deputies have asked for the requisite steps to be taken to ensure the continuity of the legislative process, including observance by the Federal Assembly chambers of the timeframe laid down by the Russian Federation Constitution for referring adopted federal laws to the head of state for signing and promulgation.

Russia: Election Candidates Present Social Programs

LD2805210296

[FBIS Report] Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian at 0425 GMT on 28 May carries an election broadcast by presidential candidate Yuriy Vlasov, who spells out his social program.

He says the current situation is complex due to the collapse of the old social system but a new one has not yet been developed. The main task is to draw up social security legislation. The Russian people must reinstate the system of social guarantees that existed in the USSR. But they are currently insufficient because of the dangers brought in by the free market, such as bankruptcy. Subsistence levels, pensions, and wages must be increased. Housing must be further developed. But the priority is the drawing up of legislation in the social sphere. He says that the public sector must be reorganized and made more efficient.

At 0510 GMT presidential candidate Mikhail Gorbachev is asked to spell out his social program. He says he is in favor of all forms of ownership. Private property must exist alongside state-owned property. Russia will not be able to survive another social upheaval, he says. Democratic reforms must continue, but priority must be given to social protection: Everyone must have an opportunity to work and to earn as much as they wish and can. But those who are in need of state protection, that is, the old, disabled people and students, must be given state protection.

At 0630 GMT Sergey Filatov presents the social program of the current president, Boris Yeltsin, who is also a presidential candidate in the coming elections.

An unidentified correspondent asks Filatov if pensioners, and to a lesser extent students, are suffering from poverty.

Filatov says that unfortunately the whole system of the Soviet power was not concerned about enriching the state budget. In this respect we all must change our mentality, because a balanced budget is the wealth of our social sphere and our defense system. It is also a rich source for us to fight crime. It is everyone's wealth. By gradually resolving the problem of the economic crisis and economic reforms, we are enriching our budget, making the resolution of all the other problems realistic. Filatov says that in the social sphere, as far as students are concerned, there are two ways of resolving their problems: Through the development and the guaranteed provision of state protection. This must be and is the main task.

The second task is to develop public foundations, to develop and support foundations existing at enterprises, so that everyone working at these enterprises could receive additional social protection, pensions for old people, and grants for students. These are the main elements that will have to be developed in the next four years.

At 1022 GMT presidential candidate Vladimir Zhirinovskiy talks about his social program with correspondent Dmitriy Chikarov.

Chikarov says that practically all the candidates have been saying that if they are elected they will give every support to low-income earners, such as pensioners, students, and families with many children. He asks Zhirinovskiy what is your solution to this problem and what can be done about it?

Zhirinovskiy replies that they are telling lies. None of them will give any support to anyone. He says that one eccentric from our party, Levitskiy, was mainly targeting women in St. Petersburg. What he can get is some of St. Petersburg women's votes. There is no point in deceiving people. He wants to force them to do voluntary work again. But they are sick of all this. They want a rest. The same thing is happening here. So, they are trying to woo pensioners, young people,

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low-income earners, the disabled, and families with many children. But the money must be obtained from a different source. Everyone must be able to enjoy life. Look at this situation. Suppose, they give money to a pensioner. But what if he has two unemployed relatives in his family? Do you think the family will be happy? No, there will be a conflict. Imagine a grown-up son, 40 years of age, without a job while his mother has a raise in pension. In other words he will be living off his mother. This is disgusting. Normal conditions must be created for everyone. Enough of dividing people into the sick, disabled, under-aged, single parents, and families with many children. Good conditions must be created for the whole country.

The person himself will know that if he has a well-paid job he can have five or as many as seven children. He will be able to buy cars and clothes. He will have children because he loves them, loves raising them and taking them to school. He is simply interested in having many children. But then he knows he has the money to raise them. But when people have children because they are poor, because they have no job, because all they can do is stay in bed endlessly, then they have seven to eight children by the age of 30 but no food to feed them.

Zhirinovskiy continues: Man must be able to support his wife. You must not marry unless you can earn. My nephew got married while still at school, without having anywhere to live. People must first achieve something in life and then marry.

They are not being serious when they put their stakes on the disabled, low-income earners, and pensioners. There must be no disabled. A child must not be needy. He must have a rich father. A father who has no wealth cannot help his child.

Zhirinovskiy says that people must not be humiliated. They must be given an opportunity to work. That was the problem with communists. They did not allow people to work. That was the trouble. But once you give people an opportunity to work, they will be able to earn their own living. They do not have to be helped as if they were poor, sick, or disabled.

At 1335 Gennadiy Zyuganov outlines his social program. An unidentified correspondent asks: What measures do you intend to take to support those who have now found themselves below the realm of desire. I have in mind pensioners, students, and single mothers. These people need special (?protection).

Zyuganov says that you are right. [Words indistinct] some are sick since childhood. Single mothers and families with many children. I have recently been to Perm and visited a hospital there. They can provide medicine for one prescription only. They have no money. People have to bring their own cups and sheets. I also visited school No. 28 there. Before they were able to give a hot breakfast to everyone, but now only one in three gets it. Children are lining up to scrounge a piece of bread in the canteen, and every day there are incidents of someone fainting through hunger. Incidentally, that is one of the consequences of reforms.

Zyuganov continues: We have now prepared a draft law on guaranteed free secondary and higher education. Every child must have an opportunity to receive a complete education. If some have extra money they can go wherever they wish and get an education there. But there must be guarantees. As for funds, they exist in the country. It is just that they need to be identified and channelled in the right direction.

The correspondent asks where will they come from. Zyuganov replies that there are many sources of income. Take the light textile industry, which is making very little money nowadays. Let us take measures to make the light textile industry work. There is access to Central Asia. [words indistinct]

At 1422 GMT Presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed speaks about his social program. He says that how civilized society is, is defined by its attitude toward children and old people and by the way we let the former borrow and by the way we repay our debts to the latter. After all, all of us have to remember that we will all grow old and infirm one day, if we live to see that day. At present we are forming and raising the young generation and this will determine the way in which we will be treated when we are old. We can either bring them up as human beings or as wolf cubs. The problem of the very young and the old is very important. While the former have no experience, the latter have no time or energy. If we want to take care of our country's future, we must take care of these two categories of people regardless. You can tell me that there is no money for it, but I will tell that there is money. When Finance Minister Panskov says that he is ready to invest 16 trillion rubles or $1 billion in the restoration of Chechnya — while telling us that this would not affect the budget — I naturally want to ask him: Is your budget bottomless, esteemed minister? This sum is more than required by science, culture, education, and health. What are you talking about? How can it be? All the others — the healthy and the young — can earn their own living. We must take care of all this scrupulously.

Zyuganov then speaks about the Army. It is at present supplied with only 40 percent of the food it requires. This means that soldiers are fed just once a day on

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three days of the week — not three times. People in the Army today are dying of [?dystrophy]. There are quite a lot of incidents like this in the Army. The Army has been squeezed dry. If you want to try and squeeze more you will have to stop feeding the soldiers altogether. Then another question arises: If the state has drafted a person into the Army, it has effectively placed him in the service of the state for a period of time. But if the state is unable to provide him with everything necessary it must not call him up. But if the state has drafted him, then it must provide him with a bed, food, and clothes. All this is spelled out in certain documents.

Russia: Presidential Campaign in Krasnoyarsk, Orenburg, Saratov Viewed

MK2905104096 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 28 May 96 p 2

[Ye.K.-signed report under the general headline: "A Country of Undisturbed Voters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Communist campaign is as simple as "hello." Dig up shortcomings, which is easy to do, and blow them out of proportion. Promise in the same breath that as soon as power gets into the right hands, goodies will start falling into your lap from the sky, the bankers will share their riches with the poor, and the repented "criminal elements" will form a line at the prison gate.

It is no simple task to counter their iron logic of everyday existence. Especially in the current economic situation. Strange as it is, the campaign of Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] has also concentrated on digging up all sorts of abuse. Regional campaign headquarters together with the ODOP (All-Russia Movement of the Public in Support of B.N. Yeltsin) are digging up violations with no less care and report them to the top — to rectify the situation. The abuses mainly consist in unpaid wages, allowances, and pensions. A voter who is hungry and hurt is a biased voter. Urgent measures to eliminate shortages are sometimes effective.

The current presidential campaign in the regions, unlike the previous one, proceeds without impassioned rallies and speeches on barricades. First, the Communists are rather self-confident and can manage without loud preelection scandals. Second, they have now adopted the "old-fashioned" methods of agitation: They now go to the people. They go from door to door and discuss the none-too-good life, suggesting at the same time the idea of salutary "Communism with a human face." The presidential team is as sophisticated: It has decided to "beat" the enemy with its own weapon and on its own territory. Being trained in all the regions are agitators, and teams of agitators are being put together and tour towns and villages with concert programs and unobtrusively explain the situation in the country. There is yet another form of "getting closer to the people:" public reception rooms. In Krasnoyarsk Kray, for example, 36 public reception rooms have been organized. Anyone can go there to get free legal assistance or a consultation of a psychologist or just to vent hard feelings.

Each region gambles in the "struggle" on something of its own. Krasnoyarsk gambles on public reception rooms and talking directly to people. Arkadiy Veprev, Yeltsin's official campaign representative in Krasnoyarsk Kray, went around collective and state farms during the [May] holidays greeting the villagers on behalf of the president. Orenburg Oblast "specializes" in sports events campaigning. There was an international minisoccer tournament on 9 May in support of the incumbent president, and there were children's competitions between 7 and 9 May. Planned to be held soon is an event called "Sport in Support of the President," timed for the opening of a stadium in Novotroitsk. Soon, "Entertainment Stars in Support of Yeltsin" will descend on Orenburg Oblast. Yeltsin's popularity has markedly increased in the regions were they have already played, it is argued. Incidentally, Orenburg students set up a KVN [Club of Merry Quick Wits], which has actively joined the canvassing campaign. The Association of Youth plans to hold on Independence Day — 12 June — an ambitious youth event in support of the president. Much hope is pinned on the tour of Gennadiy Khazanov [comedian]. He has been entrusted with the most difficult areas of all: He will "warm up" the military people on the Donguz training ground and in the air-defense missile school.

Saratov Oblast is a typical "Red region." After the recent appointment of Dmitriy Ayatskov as governor, the situation began to slowly change for the better. The new governor is one of the locals, and he knows the region's problems from "A" to "Z." He may not be too great an admirer of Yeltsin, but he is a convinced advocate of reforms. You cannot hide it: Much depends on the leading personnel. But the campaign there is based on more than the personal prestige of the authorities. Since Saratov has always been the Communists' turf, it was decided to borrow their methods: a strong team of canvassers has been created, who "go from door to door." There is at the moment one canvasser per 500 inhabitants of the oblast. The Communist electorate is not distinguished for its restraint and refinement. They can chase you from the house, give you a tongue lashing and be free with their fists. In Tyumen, the presidential headquarters decided to influence the masses with the great power of art: The annual festival

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Days of Puppet Theaters of the Urals is being held under the slogan of support for Yeltsin. Taking part in it will be 37 companies from Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, and even Australia. Generally speaking, the picture around Russia is as follows: Where presidential headquarters are working, one can see changes for the better, and where matters take their own course, it is all in the fog. Things have changed for the better also where performing artists have met with the people. People have become tired of having faith in politicians, and they still have faith in the "conscience of the nation:" people of the arts. Especially if they not simply campaign but tell what they really think.

Russia: Election Scene Reports From Krasnoyarsk, Volgograd, Altay

MK2905065196 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 28 May 96 p 2

[Reports under the general headline: "A Country of Undisturbed Voters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The local Communists are planning to strike the main campaign blow at Krasnoyarsk voters during the first 10 days in June. They are preparing for that moment a slew of leaflets and posters. The party newspaper TOVARISHCH is prepared to publish in a 20,000-copy print run for such an event. Incidentally, more than half of the just published issue of this newspaper is filled with publications devoted to the presidential candidate Gennadiy Zyuganov.

Voters here are getting indoctrinated on the personal basis. Each Communist is allotted a certain number of apartments or housing blocks. He is supposed to go and talk with their occupants and hand them campaign materials....

"We are planning to go beyond the bounds of our usual audience, to renew our electorate. We are gambling on artistic intellectuals, students, entrepreneurs. We are trying to show that the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] is a political entity which has new approaches," says one of the leaders of the Krasnoyarsk Kray CPRF organization Vsevolod Sevostyanov. A "new approach" of Krasnoyarsk Communists consists in contacts with entrepreneurs. Local businessmen are given an unequivocal hint that only those will be able to exist undisturbed who will now contribute money for Zyuganov's electoral campaign: "Receiving support from them, we will later support them if we come to power. In this situation the West will stand still for some time, and entrepreneurs will have to survive and to preserve enterprises and collectives. Hence, they have to make their choice even before 16 June."

But Krasnoyarsk Communists are hoping to make the most weighty final touch in the election campaigning when Gennadiy Zyuganov "himself" will arrive. [signed, Boris Ivanov, RIA NOVOSTI correspondent, specially for MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS] * * *

A public group in support of President Yeltsin in Volgograd has analyzed 35 main newspapers of the city and the region. It has drawn the following conclusions:

A negative attitude to the pursued course is expressed by 15 newspapers; neutral, by eight; positive, by seven; attitude was not defined in five newspapers.

Negative coverage of the presidential campaign is found in 28 newspapers; positive coverage, in two, no definite stance was found in five newspapers.

Attitude to Yeltsin: negative in 15 newspapers, positive in six, neutral in six, no definite attitude was found in nine newspapers.

Stance of administration heads of the region: one expressed support for Yeltsin, the rest (more than 30) did not voice their views. * * *

A teachers' strike is being prepared in the Republic of Altay. State Duma Deputy Semen Zubakin has explained what is happening in the region. The Russian Federation Ministry of Finance has set aside for the republic 34 billion rubles [R] to pay back wages, but the Altay Government has spent R16 billion of this "earmarked money" to buy coal (according to what they say). Teachers were not paid their salaries after all. To rectify the situation in some way, the government chairman went to Moscow to ask for additional R16 billion. But what for? The Finance Ministry has paid all of the wages money. The chairman made a "smart move," asking to set aside money for... coal. The Finance Ministry justly thought that there is no urgent need for buying coal right before summer and denied the request. The official returned to the republic to tell the teachers that Moscow provides no money for paychecks. The trade unions are in a resolute mood, the teachers are told not to go to the graduation examinations. Whom do you think the deceived people will vote for?

There is another interesting preelection detail in the republic. Vladlen Volkov, head of the regional headquarters in Yeltsin's support is at the same time head... of the republic's CPRF committee. [signed, Yelena Korotkova]

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Russia: Poll Shows Voters Grouped at Two Extremes

MM2805142396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 May 96 p 2

[Article by Yuriy Levada of the All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinion on Social and Economic Questions: "Nineteen Days to the Election: Russian Voters Between Two Extremes"]

[FBIS Translated Text] As the configuration of forces in the election becomes clearer, problems concerning the meaning and the future of this configuration — not just the "fateful" day of 16 June (plus the second round) but also the post-election prospects — come increasingly to the fore.

The Dynamics of the Situation

According to all the data, Yeltsin's vote is increasing week on week. His slight advantage over his main first-round rival, recorded at the start of the month, has become more pronounced. Around 27 percent of respondents are now inclined to vote for the incumbent president in the first round, 21 percent for Zyuganov, while Yavlinskiy, who stands third in terms of level of support, maintains his 7 percent. Converted into the likely number of those taking part in the election, the distribution of votes is as follows: 33 percent for Yeltsin, 26 percent for Zyuganov, 9 percent for Yavlinskiy, 7 percent each for Zhirinovskiy and Lebed, and 4 percent for Fedorov, with the remaining contenders mustering no more than 1 percent each. (The All-Russia Center for the Study of Public Opinion on Social and Economic Questions research was completed 22 May, a Russia-wide sample of 1,600 people having been polled. The questionnaire was commissioned by the Itogi television company).

Let us note some of the most marked shifts in voters' intentions. Yeltsin's support among Muscovites and the inhabitants of major cities grew by 7-8 percent; among the rural population the positions of the main contenders grew closer (at the start of May the gap was 14 percent, it is now 6 percent), but Zyuganov still remains ahead here. Among workers, specialists, and employees the proportion of those intending to vote for him increased by more than 10 percent in each group; moreover, for the first time in recent months supporters of the president among workers gained superiority over supporters of the Communist contender (32 and 23 percent respectively). There are clear shifts toward greater support for Yeltsin among the youngest voters — 20-30-year-olds. Zyuganov maintains a significant edge, without any changes, among older people and pensioners (27 and 40 percent).

Yeltsin's advantage in the first round (which still does not denote "election victory" — some newspapers have hastily interpreted the poll findings as such) gives him a pretty reliable launchpad for the contest with Zyuganov in the second round. If, as it is now possible to anticipate, there is a roughly 70 percent turnout, their votes would be allocated as follows: 50 percent for Yeltsin, 37 percent for Zyuganov, and 7 percent against both, while 6 percent are still "don't knows."

If Yavlinskiy got into the second round, he could not stand up to Zyuganov.

Resources — "Ours" and "Theirs"

At the beginning of the election campaign there were grounds for thinking that the potential support for B. Yeltsin in society is approximately one-third of the adult population — that, according to the findings over a number of months, was the overall level of trust in the president. At the same time G. Zyuganov's potential could be judged by the results of last December's Duma election — around one-quarter of the voters supported the Communist forces taken together. Yeltsin's supporters have displayed exceptional energy in tapping their potential in recent months and have persuaded half the population that "nonetheless" he will remain president. Only among Zyuganov's voters is there now a majority (57 percent) who think that their candidate will win; all the other contenders' supporters acknowledge Yeltsin's success in advance. For example, fewer than 10 percent of Yavlinskiy's voters believe their candidate will win.

It is perfectly obvious that the shifts in voters' intentions in recent weeks are directly related to the fact that the dichotomous nature of our political scene, divided according to the old principle that "those who are not with us are against us," has conclusively taken shape, as it were, during this period. The consequences of its application will soon be far from unambiguous — to employ guarded language — but today this rule is operating and is dispatching the players in the political drama to different corners of the stage. As a result, Yeltsin's constituency is growing from among the opponents of Zyuganov and his party base.

Our latest poll has made clear that a little over half (53) percent of those intending to vote for Yeltsin in the second round will do so because they support him, while 42 percent will do so because they do not want to see Zyuganov president, and 5 percent are "don't knows." In other words, Yeltsin will have voters made up in two almost equal parts — "his" and "theirs" — in the crucial second round. The breakdown is somewhat different among Zyuganov's voters: Two-thirds [63 percent] support the Communist leader, one-third will vote for him to oppose Yeltsin.

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The difference in the makeup of Yeltsin's voters in the two rounds is very interesting, in my view. In the first round it is mainly "his" voters who intend to support him (a ratio of 65 "for" to 30 "against"), whereas among those who will side with him in the second round and could perhaps also secure the incumbent president's success it is "theirs" who predominate (a ratio of 21 "for" to 72 "against"). Half of the Muscovites and more than half of young people, specialists, and Russia's Democratic Choice [DVR] and Yabloko voters who turn out to vote for Yeltsin will do so mainly or solely to stymie Zyuganov. That is how the current president's total potential support is made up.

"Today" and "Yesterday"

It is not just two political philosophies or political programs (indeed the programs had not yet been published by the time of the poll), but, as it were, two periods in our life — the contradictory present and the nostalgic past — which are contrasted in the symbolic figures of the main candidates. As has already been said, there was not room in the political arena for the "third" temporal dimension, that is to say, alternative futures. The president has gained the chance of electoral success to no small extent because his main opponents have been unable to break free of the past, whose influence they have failed to overcome fully, while his other rivals (democratic and other alternatives) have been unable to present cogent plans for the future. As a result we remain in an arena where "today" and "yesterday" stand opposed.

The polls show that voters in general, albeit with certain reservations, have accepted the imposed choice between two extremes. And hence also the criterion of choice in terms of today's yardsticks. The hopes of respondents in support of their candidates break down as follows:

	Yeltsin	Zyuganov
...he will be able to restore the good things that existed prior to perestroyka	4	26
...he will be able to continue the reforms in the interests of the whole of the population of Russia	32	3
...he will be able to guarantee stability and order	24	18

And finally, a small but telling snapshot of how voters see Russia's immediate postelection future (expressed in percentages of the number of those taking part in the election):

	The Situation in the Country			
	will improve	will stay the same	will get worse	don't know
President Yeltsin	27	42	24	7
President Zyuganov	29	13	38	20

There is little hope of improvement, and that hope is distributed equally between the candidates, but the expectation of the "same" situation being maintained works in Yeltsin's favor.

A President "Representing a Minority" or a President "For All"?

In recent weeks strenuous efforts have been made to scare us with opinions that electing a president "representing a minority of the population" will lead to a dangerous split in society. Simple calculation shows that, given the actual political rivalry, no president in practice has any chance of winning an outright majority of votes. At present public opinion as a whole (around 60 percent of respondents) favors the election loser, whoever he may be, acknowledging his own defeat and recognizing the elected president's legitimacy.

The dynamics of the present election situation do not reside just in the fact that Boris Yeltsin's chances of reelection have increased — the chances of normal constitutional development before and after the presidential election have also increased.

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Russia: Armed Forces Intervention in Election Campaign Ruled Out

BR2405140496 Rome IL MESSAGGERO in Italian 24 May 96 p 14

[Interview with Russian General Nikita Chaldimov by Roberto Livi in Moscow; date not given: "A High-Ranking Russian Commander Reassures the Kremlin: No Coups"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Generals calling for the presidential election to be postponed so as to "avert the danger of civil war"; Communist Party leaders revealing plans for coups; Yeltsin deciding by decree to reform the Armed Forces and getting ready to torpedo the defense minister, guilty of the disgraceful conduct of his troops in Chechnya. On the eve of the presidential election, the Russian Army is casting its shadow across the political stage. Is there a risk of the generals erupting onto it with an act of force capable of halting the electoral process? We put the question to General Nikita Chaldimov, deputy commander of the Military Academy (the Former Lenin Academy) in Moscow, an academic and Yeltsin's recent appointee to the Human Rights Committee.

[Chaldimov] It is my deeply held conviction that the Armed Forces will not intervene in the election campaign. It is not in our tradition to do so. As far as I know, even if the idea of postponing the election is being aired by a few military commanders, no one is ready, in actual fact, to take the responsibility for using violence to halt the presidential election.

[Livi] Nevertheless, the Army seems to be split. The top ranks back Yeltsin, but the lower-ranking officers seem to be on the Communist, Zyuganov's, side.

[Chaldimov] That is what the Communists say. The Armed Forces are a part of Russian society. It is only natural for them to be divided, just as the electorate is divided. The lower-ranking officers often come from rural areas where the Communist Party is strong and they themselves can view the past in a positive light. But I do not believe the opinion polls published by the Communist Party.

[Livi] Some generals, such as the commander of the presidential guard, Korzhakov, have come out in favor of a compromise between Yeltsin and the Communists.

[Chaldimov] The idea of a compromise is not to be rejected out of hand, at least in theory. An attempt to find some common ground to take the venom out of the electoral clash might work, but personally I do not think that the idea can turn into a sort of coalition between President Yeltsin and the Communists. I firmly believe that the election represents a better guarantee for democracy.

[Livi] The president has signed a decree abolishing conscription by the year 2000 and converting the Russian Armed Forces into a professional body. However, the generals do not seem to have reacted favorably.

[Chaldimov] The decree serves a purpose because it can form the backbone of real — and necessary — Armed Forces reform. However, a lot of hard work needs doing before we get to the point where conscription can be abolished, otherwise the Army, cut off from its links with the grass roots, would be in danger of turning itself into a state within a state, an organization subject only to its own internal rules, and therefore difficult to control.

[Livi] Further talk is being heard of Defense Minister Pavel Grachev being fired, sacrificed on the altar of the presidential election, and of peace negotiations in Chechnya. How do you see the top military ranks reacting?

[Chaldimov] The answer is obvious, seeing that the top ranks in the Armed Forces were selected and appointed by Grachev. The generals who are in their posts by virtue of their loyalty to and friendship with the current defense minister cannot but be upset, seeing that it puts their careers at stake as well. But there are many other officers who do not think solely of their own careers, but of the future of the Army, and that of Russia as well. If someone capable of directing and reforming the Armed Forces is appointed to succeed Grachev, I think the majority of the military will react positively.

Russia: Candidates View Role of Public Television

964F2265A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 18 May 96 p 4

[Comments by presidential candidates reported by Antonina Belyayeva and Grigoriy Zaslavskiy; place and date not given: "Between Romanticism and Commerce: Russia's Presidential Candidates Answer NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA Questions Concerning Their Attitude Toward Television"]

[FBIS Translated Text] All our interviews of recent weeks have testified that the television channels are preparing for the presidential elections, thinking about them, and trying to be dispassionate, and, as Eduard Sagalayev, for example, said in an interview with NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (20 April 1996), "there will be no avowed biological anticommunism" on the Russia channel. Sergey Blagovolin (NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA for 27 April 1996) said that on Public Russian Television all that concerns the elections is "strictly regulated" and termed the Central Election Commission

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instructions the "guiding star." But it is not only television which is thinking about the elections (and it would be odd were this the case). The politicians who have joined the struggle for the presidency themselves link with television—so powerful a medium of agitation, to employ Lenin's formula, is not only a collective agitator but also a collective organizer—their illusions, and some people nurse grievances, perhaps. We decided to give all the candidates registered by the Central Election Commission an opportunity to share their thoughts about television. All were offered the following questions:

Were you to win the coming presidential elections, what would your actions in respect to television be? What would you like to change on television even today, in the campaign period?

Of the 11 candidates for the presidency, there was no response to the questions, for perfectly explicable reasons, from Boris Yeltsin, and for enigmatic reasons, from Yuriy Vlasov and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

Vladimir Bryntsalov

Television, like all mass media, should mold public opinion with public funding. Under the present conditions it is impossible to maintain private television companies, and for this reason thriving television is a concern of the state. I intend to introduce and lobby in the Duma for a law on a minimum wage for the worker of R3.5 million. The pay of television employees, however, should be roughly twice as much—they not only have to support a family but have to be creative as well. In addition, I believe that the state is required to purchase from the program makers their product. As far as my actions in respect to television are concerned, I believe that the president is not entitled to interfere in the television process—this is a matter for professionals.

Mikhail Gorbachev

I want television and freedom of speech (limited only by the law and journalists' sense of inner responsibility) to be synonymous. Otherwise we will not see either a democratic society or a state based on the rule of law. This actually means the liberation of television from the constant backstage pressure of the authorities, money, and clan groupings. Unfortunately, some forms of ideological control have come to be replaced by other, more concealed, but no less rigid, forms.

I would demand one thing—observance of the law on elections of the president of the Russian Federation. Without this, the elections themselves become a fiction. A television company cannot be replaced by one-man political theater, where stormy applause developing into an ovation is heard constantly. You can lose a sense of time this way and fail to notice that the elections have long been over.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy

When I come to power, no television program will be shut down. It is simply that other broadcasts—more honest and talented—will be created against all those that lie. Word against word, truth against lies—only thus.

The present television has become a spokesman for the regime. There should be different views, different viewpoints, not only the interests of the regime. The present television is not national television inasmuch as it has ignored all national issues. And it is totally indistinguishable from party television. Unequivocally. The people who were in charge of television and radio broadcasting under the Communists direct them as before. This should not be the case.

Gennadiy Zyuganov

I support public television expressing the interests of all citizens of the country, all parties and movements, and all branches of power. I continue to insist that public councils from the best representatives of the artistic intelligentsia, people who are well known in the country and who are capable of softening the unchecked and at times cynical transition from romantic television to commercial television, be formed on television's public channels.

It should be mentioned that TV air time has at times become very hazardous. This could apply to other mass media also, for that matter. Can we speak about the full-fledged freedom of the press when journalists are frequently being subjected to crude moral and material pressure? Unfortunately, television itself is largely contributing to the fanning of hysteria in a society which is already harassed by onerous living conditions and preaching cults of violence, cruelty, and of getting rich at any price. Blood is spilled and shots are heard on the screen endlessly. Our task is to pool the efforts of all healthy forces of society in the fight against the crime that has engulfed Russia, put our own house in order, and prevent it being turned into a criminal hangout. Television is perfectly capable of helping the accomplishment of this task.

Aleksandr Lebed

I profoundly respect and understand the necessity and importance of television for society. TV should be a support of the president in the running of the state to a large extent.

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Without any doubt, private television companies should exist together with public television.

But Channel 1, which is relayed throughout Russia and the former CIS [as published], is the face of the country. It cannot be privately owned, therefore. Only publicly owned. This does not mean that it should be closed down, not at all. It is simply that air time—TV's main value—must be shared fairly. One thing is required of television—more objectivity. For it already has everything else.

Aman Tuleyev

First, I am not a supporter of emergency measures in relation to television. In addition, the innumerable commercial studios, which operate together with the public studios, should always be, in my view, free of the arbitrary action of government officials, the president included. The main condition of their existence is that they abide by current laws and live by the interests of their television audience.

Both the economics and the legal status of the public television channels are, I believe, in need of reform since the political ideology they propound is more reminiscent not of the market but of a crafty political bazaar. Public TV exists on the money of all taxpayers, seemingly, but reflects not even the interests of the state but the interests of the ruling individual. For this reason the legal status of public TV should be defined by a law equal for all, not by a "directive team." All candidates for the office of president of the Russian Federation, for example, should, according to the law, be accorded truly equal conditions. Not only the executive but also the legislature should be among the cofounders of the studios. Even better, there should be no "power" cofounders! A TV public political council, and that's all. And funding only from the federal budget. Believe me, television would benefit from this and would become emancipated and more interesting. I am sure that under any president TV must live according to the law, not according to the marketplace, and be a sensitive instrument of social accord, not a tomahawk in the hands of political savages....

And the final point: Professionals should work in TV and be in charge of it, we have enough of these, thank God.

Svyatoslav Fedorov

I would like to see more programs on the problems of morals and ethics and a greater portrayal of what is being created in Russia. After all, the "new Russians" are not only putting up stylish dachas and private residences for themselves but they are also building plants and creating new technology. I do not want to feel, having watched television, that I am living in a country that is heading toward the bottom.

Martin Shakkum

Direct administrative interference on the part of state officials in the creative process in television causes nothing but harm, as a rule.

But there is "another side of the coin" also. Freedom on television, as in society as a whole, is understood today as freedom from obligations. Attempts are being made to extend to television automatically the laws of the market, which can, it is alleged, "regulate everything of its own accord." And what do we have as a result? A superfluity on public television channels of second-rate Latin American movie products and a wallowing in violence and a variety of seamy sides of life and also an abundance of pornography, which it is impossible to imagine even on public television in the West.

In my view, television channels 1 and 2 should be public and should perform their main function—conveyance to the citizens of public policy. I would ban immediately propaganda of sexual perversions, violence, and brutality on public television channels. I would simultaneously increase the funding for domestic films and television programs.

As far as commercial television is concerned, it should exist together with public television, not in place of it and not thanks to the material base which was created over decades and which cost our people a huge amount of money.

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CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 29 May

LD2905081096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0449 GMT 29 May 96

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (ITAR-TASS) — The Russian press centres on a sudden trip by President Boris Yeltsin to Chechnya, the just-ended talks in the Kremlin with the leaders of Chechen separatists and the presidential race.

The Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper calls the document on a ceasefire in Chechnya, signed in the Kremlin on May 27, and Yeltsin's visit to Groznyy as "a resolute step to peace."

In an article entitled "Talks in full swing: Yeltsin — in Groznyy, Yandarbiyev — in Moscow," the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper writes: "The leaders of Ichkeria continued the talks in Moscow yesterday with unimportant people from the third power circle in Russia, while President Yeltsin carried out his main task: he walked on Chechen soil."

Noting that the Russian president outplayed leader of Chechen separatists Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the newspaper emphasises: "Yeltsin made a brilliant manoeuvre. Some people are now evidently eating their top sheepskin hat."

Komsomolskaya Pravda draws the conclusion that democratic Russia showed, thereby, its "imperial" teeth which "are still strong."

The Izvestiya newspaper does not share at all euphoria concerning Yeltsin's "breakthrough" on "the Chechen front." In an article entitled "Military and Chechen diasporas are in no hurry to celebrate peace," the daily, commenting on the Kremlin ceasefire agreement in Chechnya from June 1, writes that "tempestuousness with which the agreement was signed, and a sudden refusal of the sides from any preliminary conditions provokes apprehensions that peace may again turn into an armistice."

Komsomolskaya Pravda, Izvestiya and other newspapers report an arrest at the Nalchik airport of Alla Dudayeva, the widow of former "Ichkeria president" Dzhokhar Dudayev and her release on personal orders from Yeltsin.

Izvestiya front-pages information that the Council of atamans of the Kuban Cossak army (Eds: paramilitary organisation) "takes polling stations in the Krasnodar Territory under its control to conduct democratic presidential elections" on June 16.

The Argumenty I Fakty weekly carries a brief summary of the platform by presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed under the title "Ideology of common sense."

The newspaper calls attention to such planks in the candidate's platform as the need to establish "law and order" in the country facing an emerging "criminal society," tough struggle against corruption in government bodies, reform of the army, better tax and banking systems.

The Pravda newspaper features an interview with prominent Russian scholar and publicist Aleksandr Zinovyev under the title "West will lose by backing Yeltsin." The interview notes that "there is no firm and common decision" among ruling quarters in the West to support either Yeltsin or Zyuganov in Russia.

The publicist living now abroad claims that "many understand here" that "Yeltsin's victory will hardly be beneficial for the West. This will not improve the situation in Russia and will bring new problems to the West.

"In any case, this will entail new expenses for this regime, since it is necessary to feed it."

In the article "President Kuchma gets rid of his political rival," Izvestiya comments on the sacking by the Ukrainian president of his premier Yevgeniy Marchuk who is described as "a serious political rival" of Kuchma and possible future president of the country.

Examining "outside" and "inside" reasons for the dismissal, the daily notes that "the authorities need to find a scapegoat guilty of the slow progress of reforms and a brewing social crisis."

Izvestiya emphasises that the dismissal of Marchuk and appointment of Pavel Lazarenko in his place are another attempt by the present president to concentrate all power in the hands of his "Dnepropetrovsk team."

The army newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda carries an interview with Georgian Defence Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze. The general said: "I affirm unequivocally: all accusations against Georgia about its sliding into 'NATO embrace' are totally groundless."

"Russian bases in Georgia must be," Nadibaidze stressed. [sentence as received] "We shall not build our full-fledged army without Russian military bases over the next two decades. Besides, our state interests directly depend on Russian military presence in the region."

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Baltics: Presidents Arrive in Vilnius for Summit

WS2805143296 Tallinn BNS in English 1319 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 28, BNS — Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis and his Estonia counterpart Lennart Meri arrived in Vilnius Tuesday to take part in a summit of the Baltic heads of state.

The delegations headed by the presidents of the Baltic states was scheduled to start at the Draugyste hotel in Vilnius at 12.30 Tuesday.

After the summit the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian presidents, Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis, and Lennart Meri, are planning to sign a joint declaration.

The social security ministers of the three countries intend to sign Lithuanian-Estonian and Latvian-Estonian treaties on cooperation in the field social security guarantees.

Lithuania and Latvia signed a similar agreement in 1993 and put it into effect as of January, 1995. A cooperation treaty is also to be signed by the Lithuanian and Estonian government news agencies ELTA and ETA.

Baltics: Presidents Issue Summit Declaration on Cooperation

WS2905084396 Tallinn BNS in English 1900 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 28, BNS — Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian presidents spoke without reservations in favour of the promotion of trilateral cooperation in the Baltics and said they will be further seeking "integration into all European institutions."

"We hope that our countries can and will make a joint contribution to the European Union [EU] and NATO. We want to take these significant steps together and not in competition with each other, acknowledging that the security of the Baltic states, as well as Europe, is manyfold and indivisible," the Baltic leaders said in a joint declaration on Partnership for Integration signed in Vilnius on Tuesday.

Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis and Lennart Meri said both EU and NATO should start accession process simultaneously with the Baltic and other Central European countries, "even if actual membership will take some time."

The countries are driven by the hope that their place is in a unified Europe and not by a fear of third countries, the declaration read.

"Our three nations are determined to sacrifice everything necessary to achieve these goals," the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian leaders said.

Brazauskas, Ulmanis and Meri stressed that the countries' economies have been drawing closer to European standards and troops are taking part in NATO-led peace implementation operations in the former Yugoslavia.

This is a common obligation by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and "nobody has the right to try to set us against each other," the three presidents said in the declaration.

Baltics: Presidents Comment on Summit Results

WS2905084496 Tallinn BNS in English 1900 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 28, BNS — The presidents of the three Baltic states have reiterated the political unity of their countries in seeking to integrate into European and Transatlantic structures.

Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis told reporters in Vilnius Tuesday that some disagreements still exist among the Baltic countries. He stressed, however, that these are only "procedural issues" and their solution will contribute to the unity of the Baltic states.

Estonian President Lennart Meri did not answer directly what changed Estonia's position toward Baltic cooperation. Unofficially, Estonia has always been considered as the most skeptical element of Baltic unity.

President Meri stressed in his speech that "there is and will be nothing that could spark confrontation among us in the future."

The Estonian president emphasized on several occasions the common will of the Baltic countries to integrate with European security and defence structures.

The leaders of the Baltic states also stressed that there are no difference in the Baltic states' standpoints with respect to Russia.

Baltics: Leaders Reach Consensus on Integration With Europe

LD2905105996 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 28 May 96

[By reporter Rima Jakutyte]

[FBIS Translated Text] The presidents of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian, Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis, and Lennart Meri, unconditionally advocate the cooperation of the three Baltic countries in the process of integration with Europe. Leaders of the three Baltic countries, who met in Vilnius on 28 May,

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signed two documents: A declaration on partnership for integration and a joint communique.

The declaration says that the Baltic countries are able to make, and will make, their joint contribution to the European Union and NATO. The document stresses that Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia wish to make these important steps together, not in competition with each other, since they admit that the security of the Baltic countries, like the security of Europe, is complex and indivisible.

In the communique, the presidents of the Baltic countries spoke in favour of cooperation of all three countries in an attempt to create a united infrastructure for the entire Baltic region.

After signing the documents the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian presidents held a news conference.

This is already the fifth meeting of the Baltic presidents, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas noted at the news conference. Every meeting has its new topics, Brazauskas said. This meeting devoted most attention to the trilateral cooperation and integration into the European and trans-Atlantic structures.

The presidents of the Baltic countries presented their reasons for their determination to become members of the EU and NATO.

[Begin Brazauskas recording] We expressed a very clear idea that integration into the EU and NATO is not because of some kind of fear or pressure from some third countries. It is our deep belief and our firm determination that only this way is acceptable to us and only this way will guarantee the well-being of our nations and our countries in the future in both the economic and social senses and will significantly increase security guarantees for our countries. [end recording]

According to Estonian President Lennart Meri, at the time when the processes of restructuring are taking place in Europe, both in the sense of economy and security, the Baltic countries are also expressing their wish to intergrate with Europe, where they have already been [before the Second World War].

The Estonian president said that the signed political document very clrearly expresses the political will of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia and demonstrates their common goals and solidarity. The joint political will has been expressed on behalf of the Baltic region. The Baltic region is also creating its own security, and it is capable of respecting its committments and contributing to the creation of the common Baltic and European home.

In the opinion of Lennart Meri, the signed declaration certifies that there are no forces, and neither will there ever be, which could make the Baltic countries become enemies of each other. According to the president, we have already learned a lesson about this in the past. The Estonian president stressed the very strong political will expressed in the declaration. According to him, we [the Baltic nations] are good Europeans, who already now match the standards of Europe, the EU, and NATO.

Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis said that the partnership of the Baltic countries should have two directions: Toward the EU and NATO. Ulmanis admitted that countries have certain disagreements and contradictions and said that they [the disagreements] have to be overcome. The Latvian president described them as merely issues to be worked upon.

The leaders of the Baltic countries, inter alia, stressed that there are no differences in their attitude towards Russia. Answering a question on how security of the Baltic countries could be affected by the election victory of the Russian Communist leader, Gennadiy Zyuganov, the Estonian president said that the effect would be the same as that in respect of the EU and NATO. According to Meri, security is indivisible: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are a part of Europe.

Algirdas Brazauskas expressed a hope that the democratic process in Russia will continue. The Latvian president, meanwhile, noted that the processes in Russia and in Europe have already reached the level where they do not depend on a single person who is coming to power.

The Baltic presidents also commented on some aspects of relations between the Baltic countries. On the eve of the meeting, an agreement on free trade in agricultural produce between the Baltic countries was initialled in Vilnius. Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis spoke in favour of Baltic countries with no borders between them.

[Begin Ulmanis recording, in Latvian fading to Lithuanian translation] I am an optimist and I believe that the time will come when borders between the Baltic countries will be only on the map. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas criticized the situation on the borders between the Baltic countries. This situation satisfies neither Baltic citizens themselves nor the transit travellers [Brazauskas said]. The Lithuanian president emphasized the necessity to set up joint customs control checkpoints as soon as possible and implement a unified system of [customs] documents and guarantees in all three Baltic countries. In the opinion of the Lithuanian leader, the barriers which are in the way of smooth cooperation between

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Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia can be overcome with no difficulty, if there is a will to overcome them.

On Wednesday, the presidents of Latvia and Estonia will continue their visit in Lithuania.

Baltics: Baltic, Nordic Defense Ministers Discuss NATO Expansion

WS2905084596 Tallinn BNS in English 1900 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 28, BNS — The defense ministers of the Baltic and Nordic countries, at their meeting in the Lithuanian town Trakai Tuesday, voiced their concern over the predestined classification of contender-countries for membership in NATO and the European Union.

Membership talks must start with all Partner countries simultaneously because, otherwise, a new division of Europe will not be avoided, said the defense ministers.

All seven ministers agreed, however, that the criteria applied to each NATO Partner country are individual. The ministers of the Nordic countries promised to continue their assistance to the Baltic states in their bid to join the Western defence alliance.

Defense cooperation among the Baltic Sea region countries has become a significant contribution to European security.

"It has become absolutely clear now that our dialogue will not stop," said Lithuanian Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius, opening the meeting in Trakai. This is the fourth annual meeting of the defense ministers of the Baltic and Nordic countries held in late May each year.

CIS: Meeting in Bishkek Boosts Integration

LD2805202496 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today, on completion of the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the CIS, and after the signing of the four-sided agreement in the Interparliamentary Committee, the heads of delegations gave a news conference in the Kyrgyz Government House. Our special correspondent Vladimir Trushkovskiy reports from Bishkek:

[Trushkovskiy] Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the Federation Council, said the Interparliamentary Assembly was doing everything so that integration processes might be deepened and expanded. Now we are creating an Interparliamentary Committee which is working out provisions, work procedure, methods of creating legislative documents. If any fresh consolidating idea appears, Yegor Stroyev said, then the Interparliamentary Assembly will certainly approve it.

Representatives of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan reached agreement that the initial work of the committee would be carried out on the basis of the Interparliamentary Assembly. [passage omitted]

At the news conference, Yegor Stroyev, as chairman of the Council of the Interparliamentary Assembly, announced that Almambet Matubraymov, speaker of the one of the chambers of the Kyrgyz Parliament, had been elected chairman of the committee being set up under the agreement. [passage omitted]

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Russia: Yeltsin Interview on NATO, Bosnia, Chechnya

BR2805140296 Rome L'INDIPENDENTE in Italian 26-27 May 96 p 3

[Interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by Kyril Privalov; place and date not given: "Yeltsin: I Am Afraid of the Communists"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This interview marks the start of L'INDIPENDENTE's cooperation with POLITIQUE INTERNATIONALE (11, Rue du Bois de Boulogne, Paris), one of the most influential publications on issues of world politics and diplomacy. The interview was conducted by Kyril Privalov, a journalist with ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI, and author of, among other things, the book, "A Soviet in the Land of Tonton."

[Privalov] Mr. President, the preeminence of the executive, in Russia as in France, prompts some analysts to talk in terms of a "presidential republic" in connection with its mode of government. What do you think this expression means?

[Yeltsin] It recalls, first, the similarity of the political situation that prevailed in France and in Russia when this institutional system became established as the only acceptable one. At the time of the 1993 referendum, which introduced in our country what we call the "Presidential Republic," I suffered the same kind of criticisms that were made of General De Gaulle in 1962, when he submitted for the French people's approval the direct election of the president of the republic by universal suffrage. We were both accused of being usurpers, of wanting to establish a personal dictatorship. Nothing could have been further from the truth. This must be set within the context of 1993. The Supreme Soviet was in the hands of pro-Soviet revanchists, the economy was in tatters, and society was suffering such upheavals that it was essential to establish a strong government in the country. The new constitution of the Russian Federation, which was adopted in 1993, therefore was in response to a need. In any case, the facts speak for themselves and should reassure all those who fear an authoritarian decline of the system: Since the end of the Soviet Union, Russia has equipped itself with a truly democratic system, based on the separation of powers, on federalism, on a multiparty system: It leaves scope for ordinary society, it guarantees personal freedoms and the independence of the press. The president is only one factor among all the rest within this institutional architecture.

[Privalov] There have been some profound changes in the government since last December's general elections. A number of figures who represented the radical reforms of the early years have been dismissed. Do these personnel changes effect a desire to curb the policy of reforms?

[Yeltsin] Not at all. The reforms will continue wherever necessary. As for the changes within the government and within the presidential team, they should not surprise you. Russia is currently undergoing a period of dynamism. Everyday political work is evolving so rapidly that it is necessary to renew our approaches without delay, to adapt decisions, and also to change the decisionmakers. This seems to me to be natural in such a fluid situation.

[Privalov] As we know, you are a candidate in the presidential elections which are due to take place on 16 June. What reasons prompted you to ask voters to grant you a second term of office?

[Yeltsin] I have already answered this question once. As a political leader, I want to complete a number of economic and social reforms which I pledged to carry out when I was elected in 1991. Moreover, as a man and as a democrat, I believe it is necessary to prevent, by every possible means, the communists' return to power in Russia. This, because they have not changed at all, either in terms of their organization or in terms of their ideologies. They have nothing in common with western-style social democrats. Moreover, the ideas that they propound constitute a serious threat both to Russia and the Russians and to the international community.

[Privalov] You have often warned your fellow countrymen and the West against the "red-brown threat." What is the real status of this threat on the eve of the elections?

[Yeltsin] I am afraid that the period of calculations and forecasts is not yet over. Everybody heard about the resolution in favor of reestablishing the Soviet Union when it was approved by the Duma, which is dominated by the communists. That decision displays extremely dangerous political short- sightedness and ideological irresponsibility. The Bolsheviks have definitely not learned any lessons from history! Worse still, they encourage the people to nurture amnesia. It is easy to imagine what these people could do if they get back to work. Remember that there was sharp anxiety in the seventies, during the golden age of "Eurocommunism" and of the "historical compromise" in Italy. The whole of Europe wondered whether, in the event of the communist parties' acceding to power by democratic means, they would implement to the letter theories that they had developed over decades in the field of struggle. This is precisely the issue that now faces the Russian voters. If, by misfortune, the communists do return to the scene, the worst will again be possible

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— the violation of human rights and of economic freedom, the emergence of another "Iron Curtain," and the country's ideological and spiritual impoverishment. Such a prospect is absolutely unacceptable.

[Privalov] In the majority of states, the head of government is also the spiritual guide of the majority party. Do you not feel the need to create a broad popular movement around you?

[Yeltsin] This practice is less systematic than you say. Not everywhere is there a president's party. And where they do exist, these parties are the result as much of circumstances as of the institutional rationale. The trend now is toward a decline of political groupings strongly structured around a rigid ideology. We are witnessing, on the contrary, a proliferation of variable-geometry electoral coalitions, formed around a leader or a program. This is what happened in Russia in 1991. Looking ahead to the coming presidential elections, I am trying to rally around me as broad a range of political forces as possible.

[Privalov] As you know, the Russian Federation's entry into the Council of Europe has caused anxiety on this side of the continent, especially with regard to the human rights situation in your country as well as the war in Chechnya. Do you consider these criticisms well-founded?

[Yeltsin] If the Council of Europe had taken the war in Chechnya as a pretext for rejecting our membership, it would have been applying dual standards. The situation in Chechnya is merely a matter of internal order. Why do we not talk about the conflict in Northern Ireland, about the Basque problem in Spain, or about the French Government's attitude to the Kanaks in New Caledonia. As in the case of Chechnya, all these situations are legacies of the past. They have nothing to do with the present leaders: They inherited them and now they have to manage them, for better or worse.

[Privalov] Unless a rapid end is put to the military operations in Chechnya, are you not afraid that the conflict could spread internationally, as [former Chechen leader] Dudayev told the western press?

[Yeltsin] There is no danger of the conflict spreading, for the good reason that none of the republics neighboring Chechnya shares its characteristics. There are none of those chains of clan solidarity, those webs of more or less mafia-type structures, those hidden economic forces ready to engage in hostilities for the sake of criminal interests. The peoples and governments of the neighboring republics have done their utmost not to be dragged into a bloodthirsty venture, as Dudayev would like. As the plan for settling the Chechen question, which I announced on 31 March, becomes effective, the chances of an internationalization of a war will tend toward zero.

[Privalov] On other occasions, you have vehemently condemned the plans to extend NATO to the states of central and Eastern Europe. What is your present position in this regard? Could the incompatibility of the Russian and Western positions in this regard not entail a return to a confrontation between blocs?

[Yeltsin] As far as I am concerned, the two positions are not the same. Apart from mere irritation over attitudes inherited from the Cold War, NATO's continuation and, moreover, its enlargement conflict with the formulation of a security system in line with Europe's new conditions. Russia has a radically different viewpoint on this: Do I need to remind you of the purpose of NATO's defensive and offensive capability established in the fifties? Do those threats still exist? And do the new characteristics of the conflict and the tensions demand a complete revision of security mechanisms on our continent?

[Privalov] What do you think is the future of the CIS? Will it become a free-trade area, a military alliance, or a federation of states?

[Yeltsin] It can be said even now that the CIS has performed its principal task. In the crisis situation of 1991 it made it possible to avert the complete disintegration of the post-Soviet territory and to maintain a number of links between the states that emerged on the territory of the former USSR. Thanks to it, the separatist and nationalist thrusts were channeled. Consider the integration processes in which Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia are now involved. They would have been inconceivable without the CIS. As I see it, such a rapprochement serves as a model for the strengthening of ties between the republics of the former USSR.

[Privalov] The war in the former Yugoslavia demonstrated the inability of the European security system to resolve the conflicts that emerge in multinational states. What lessons can be learned from the Yugoslav tragedy for both Russia and the West?

[Yeltsin] I think I answered that in part earlier, when I spoke about NATO's enlargement. I repeat: Because of its essentially reactive character, the security system that prevails in Europe is unable to provide effective answers to this kind of crisis. Actual conditions at the end of this century require that emphasis be placed on preventive security. Despite two world wars, Europe has been unable to follow the traditional example which permitted the solution of the very controversial issue of the Aland Islands in the twenties. I think that such a strongly integrated community as the European Union

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has the resources to deploy the mechanisms that will make it possible to avert a repetition of the Yugoslav scenario.

[Privalov] Mr. President, do you think that the Dayton Accords are valid?

[Yeltsin] It all depends on the intentions of the various sides in the Bosnian conflict and the determination of the European Community to remain committed to the peace process. But if you want my personal impression, it seems to me that the people of the former Yugoslavia are very tired of this sterile war, which has condemned all the warring sides to defeat. Armenia and Azerbaijan were confronted with a similar situation in the Nagorno Karabakh crisis, until they decided to begin bilateral negotiations...

[Privalov] In conclusion, how do you view Russia's future on the eve of the 21st century

[Yeltsin] I hope there will not remain an image of me as another "dreamer of the Kremlin." However, if in the years ahead it is not overwhelmed by another political earthquake, I am sure that Russia in the next century will be a democratic state in which citizens will have no reason to fear for their own future or for that of their children. An economically developed state, equipped with a modern system of social protection. In other words, a fully fledged member of the international community, respected by all.

Russia: Grachev on NATO Eastward Expansion, Security

LD2905090296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0817 GMT 29 May 96

[ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May — Russia is prepared to cooperate with NATO in improving the European security structure but is against NATO eastward expansion, Army General Pavel Grachev, Russia's defense minister, today said at an all-army conference of top commanders of the Russian Armed Forces. He said that if the countries of the Visegrad group join NATO, it will acquire an extra 15,000 units of armaments. This contradicts previous international agreements and encroaches upon Russia's interests and undermines its security.

NATO eastward expansion not only disrupts the strategic balance but also leads to the possibility of new dangers, he said. We talk here about the deployment of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons in countries seeking to join NATO. These points in the geopolitical situation in Europe and in the whole world should be taken into account during the drawing up of plans for combat training during the summer term of Russian army training. One should realistically look at the current situation in the interests of national security and appropriately respond to attempts to move NATO closer to Russia's western borders, Grachev said.

Russia: Primakov's Cuba Trip Assessed

MM2805135196 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 May 96 p 3

[Article by Vladimir Fedorov: "Do We Remember the Taste of Cuban Sugar?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] If we present our relations with Cuba as a graph, starting with the victorious revolution on the island and ending with the present day, you get a strange wavy line. Its high and low points are so far apart that you can only marvel. Only now does there seem to be a chance of straightening out this line — following Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov's trip to Cuba.

The U.S. economic and political blockade has been one of the most painful foreign policy problems for Cuba. It was stepped up a couple of months ago after a Cuban MiG's missiles downed two U.S. light aircraft overflying the island's territorial waters. Four people died. The United States almost declared war on Cuba, but confined itself to economic measures.

Our country has always been opposed to the blockade, which is causing suffering among the Cuban people. But in our view it is not the only source of the Cuban economy's difficulties. Today virtually all the former socialist countries are reforming their economies. Cuba, however, prefers to live in the old way. Admittedly, three years ago the reform season seemed to have begun on the island. Permission was given for small private business, and by early this year there were over 200,000 private traders. Production and sale of food are the most widespread form of individual labor activity, with over 60,000 people employed in this field. However, "individual operators" have of late been increasingly returning their licenses because the tax burden is increasing. Fixed charges are being levied regardless of profits.

At a recent Central Committee plenum Defense Minister Raul Castro cursed "small businessmen" for allegedly getting rich, losing touch with the people, and corrupting the working class — the backbone of the revolution — by their example. You get the impression, the minister said, that the methods employed by the capitalist economy are more effective than socialist methods. The party will not allow society to be stratified into rich and poor.

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The Cuban Government is setting new taxes and other tough measures.

At one time attempts were made to attract foreign investment to Cuba and create joint ventures. But this influx stopped before it had a chance to begin. Foreign businessmen are afraid of Washington's ire. Foreign money provided jobs for less than 5 percent of the working population and revenue from foreign investment represented just 3 percent of Cuba's overall profits.

Foreign debt is Havana's most acute problem; it owes Russia alone $30 billion. In the past the island never experienced such woes, thanks to international aid from "big brother." The Soviet Union bought Cuban sugar at $1,400 per tonne despite the world market price of $250 — we bought 4 million tonnes a year from Havana. And we sold it 13 million tonnes of oil a year under the same system of preferential — this time reduced — prices. Cuba economized and sold the surplus to third countries, earning $300 million a year as a result. There are a host of examples of deals that were economically unprofitable for us.

Subsidies for sugar and many other goods were canceled only three years ago and exchanges of Cuban sugar for our oil were farmed out to commercial structures....

Our country wants to develop long-term relations with Cuba in light of the new realities. These relations should be cleansed of excess emotion and ideological garbage. It was from that position that the Russian foreign minister held talks in Havana. He talked with Fidel Castro and his ministers and stressed that he had come to Cuba "on the direct instructions" of Boris Yeltsin, that relations with Havana are a priority in Moscow's foreign policy, and that we have "great areas of common interest."

These relations will henceforth be based on complete equality and noninterference. We and Cuba will be guided only by our countries' interests, Yevgeniy Primakov said, obviously referring to the U.S. blockade and U.S. attempts to involve other countries in it. Russia is prepared to promote the normalization of relations between Havana and Washington although, to be realistic, they will hardly brighten up in the foreseeable future

Yevgeniy Primakov's visit is important in many respects. It showed that Russia's interest in Cuba has by no means died, as many people have claimed of late. It is another manifestation of Russia's new policy as it strives to strengthen its positions in the Third World. Needless to say, relations between Moscow and Havana will be more modest in many respects than they were in the time of the Soviet Union. But then the salvos of the Cold War rang out, the USSR and Cuba were on the same side of the front line with the United States on the other. On the other hand, now these relations have a chance of being even, mutually beneficial, and quite friendly, that is, just as they should be.

Russia: Primakov Discusses Ties With Italy's Dini in Rome

LD2805212996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2052 GMT 28 May 96

[By Aleksey Bukalov, Aleksander Kondrashov and Dmitriy Polunin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ROME, May 29 (Itar-Tass) — Visiting Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and his Italian counterpart Lamberto Dini on Tuesday discussed the development of Russian-Italian relations, the course of a peaceful settlement in the former Yugoslavia, the situation in the Middle East and other major international issues.

Prior to their talks, Primakov was accepted by Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

Addressing a news conference after the talks, the heads of the Russian and Italian foreign departments highly appreciated the level of bilateral economic and political ties.

The relations between out countries "are developing on the line of ascent," they have a friendly and confidential character, Primakov said. He also emphasised the commonness in the positions of the two countries in their approach to major international issues.

Dini, for his part, said that Italy estimates with "interest and sympathy" Russia's striving for further integration into the organisation of most industrially developed countries of the world. The Italian minister said he believed that the forthcoming G-7 summit due in the French city of Lyon late in June, would become a new major step on the way of transforming this organisation into the G-8.

The Russian-Italian political dialogue, according to Primakov, must be of a constant character, as the resolution of major international problems to a great extent depends on the joint efforts of Russia and Italy.

The Russian minister invited his Italian counterpart to visit Moscow and said that the invitation was accepted.

Focusing on the problem of Bosnian settlement, Primakov said that in the course of his talks with Dini they established the completion of the military and the beginning of the civil stage in the peaceful process in the former Yugoslavia.

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According to heads of foreign departments of the two countries, a conference on the control over the course of the Bosnian settlement scheduled for June 13 and 14 in Florence, will offer a good opportunity for analysing the achievements and problems in the resolution of the Dayton agreements.

Russia: Russian State Duma Delegation, DPRK SPA Deputies Meet

SK2805142196 Moscow Voice of Russia World Service in Korean 1200 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Due to the death of President Kim Il-song in the summer of 1994, elections have not yet been carried out in the DPRK. During a meeting with members of the Russian State Duma on 27 May, deputies of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly [SPA] pointed out that this is because of the continued mourning period.

No country holds elections during a mourning period. Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, head of the Russian side's delegation, said that this can be a measure following regional characteristics.

He said that during the Pyongyang talks, domestic and external issues of the DPRK were not dealt with. Gennadiy Seleznev had met SPA Chairman Yang Hyong-sop; Hwang Chang-yop, secretary of the Workers Party of Korea Central Committee; and Vice Premier Hong Song-nam.

Russia: Terms May Be Renegotiated on DPRK Debt

LD2905085696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0200 GMT 29 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Zakharchenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pyongyang, 29 May — The debt of more than three billion foreign currency rubles that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea owes Russia cannot be written off, but the problem might be solved by allowing a longer term for it to be repaid. Gennadiy Seleznev, chairman of the State Duma of Russia's Federal Assembly, who completed an official visit to Pyongyang today, expressed this opinion to the ITAR-TASS correspondent in a conversation.

He said that cancelling the debt had been touched upon at talks with representatives of the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but they have not yet given a definite reply. The North Korean side understands that it is the debtor, but proposes that there should be more talks before repayment is deferred. "At any rate, it is clear that some kind of agreement needs to be concluded on this issue. Perhaps the repayment period should be extended, the interest rate changed," Gennadiy Seleznev said.

The debts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were also discussed in April at the first sitting of the intergovernmental commission for trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries which took place in Pyongyang. One of the problems that persists in resolving the issue is which currency rate — the old Soviet one or the current one — to use in calculating the repayments.

Russia: SVR Refuses To Comment on Arrests in Canada

LD2805170496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1651 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] OTTAWA, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — The Canadian CBC television company in an evening news bulletin on Monday reported the arrest of two Russian spies.

The Russians were said to be kept in detention in Toronto.

The story goes that a married couple lived in Canada for years, and their papers are thought to be replicas of documents of dead Canadian citizens. The news release said the two Russians were what spy jargon calls illegal.

The couple came to Canada in the span of the recent five years.

The television report quoted sources in the Canadian Security Intelligence Service as saying that the Russians were almost immediately noted by the service.

The couple had all essential official documents which appeared to be fabricated from dates and names on tombs of Canadians who died young.

It appears the couple had separated and formed new partnerships with Canadians, the report said.

It went on to say that the Russians' mission was not to spy against Canada.

CBC quoted the intelligence service's version that they were acquiring a Canadian image to spy elsewhere, probably in Europe.

Canadian Solicitor-General Herbert Gray and Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Lucienne Robillard [name and title as received] last week ordered the arrest of the couple on charges of living with false documents.

The case has gone to the federal court and is now in secret scrutiny.

The two spies are thought to assert that they are Canadians.

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They may remain in detention until the court judge makes a ruling.

The Russians may hire a defence lawyer if the court sentences a penalty. They are eligible for appealing the ruling at the immigration and refugee department.

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service [SVR], Tatyana Samolis, declined to comment on the matter.

"The Russian Foreign Intelligence Service won't comment on the belonging of some or other person to it. This is the practice of all special services," Samolis told Itar-Tass on Tuesday.

A spokesman for the Chief Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the Russian army's Chief Staff has also refused to say whether the arrested Russians might be military intelligence officers.

Russia: Shokhin, U.S. Ambassador Discuss START II Ratification

LD2805170796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1204 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Interfax) — First deputy speaker of the Russian State Duma Aleksandr Shokhin met with U.S. Ambassador in Moscow Thomas Pickering Tuesday to discuss preparations for ratification of the START-2 Treaty by the Russian parliament.

Shokhin is acting in place of Duma speaker Gennadiy Seleznev, who is leading a parliamentary delegation on an official visit in North Korea.

Pickering, the initiator of the discussion, told Shokhin that U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry is ready to come to Moscow and address Duma deputies in order to answer their question related to ratification of the START-2 Treaty, Shokhin said. As the schedule for trips by Perry is confirmed two months in advance, Shokhin said, Perry's meeting with Russian parliamentarians could take place in late July when the current session plans to conclude its work.

Perry is more likely to address a session of the International Affairs Committee with participation of members from the Defense and Security committees and other deputies.

The meeting with the U.S. defense secretary could help Russian parliamentarians "to remove many obscurities with respect to the START-2 Treaty," Shokhin said. In this case the document could be submitted to the State Duma for ratification at the beginning of the autumn session, according to Shokhin.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin submitted the START-2 Treaty to the previous State Duma for ratification last summer.

Russia: Turkey's Armenian Border Regime Seen Impacting on Russia

MM2805145596 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 May 96 p 6

[Article by Aleksey Oganesov: "Turkey Responds to Moscow and Yerevan" — from the "Economic Union" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] Early in May the Turkish Government announced that it is tightening up the "closed" Turkish-Armenian border regime — this time on the pretext that Kurdish insurgents are using Armenian territory. Thus, the transport blockade on Armenia, which has in effect been in place since 1990, is being stepped up.

The railroad linking Armenia to Europe and the Near East (Gyumri-Akhuryan-Erzurum-Ankara-Istanbul and then on to Europe) will not service Armenian foreign economic ties in the near future. And the spur line (in eastern Turkey) from its territory to Syria, Iran, and Iraq is now no more than a symbol on the map for Armenia. In the six-year Turkish transport blockade the republic has lost tens of billions of dollars, notably owing to the disruption of many foreign economic contracts, which planned to use the transport corridor through Turkey.

But Ankara's actions are not just detrimental to Armenia but also to Georgia, Nakhichevan, and Azerbaijan. Owing to the conflict in Karabakh and the frequent disruptions to transport and economic ties on the railroad through Armenia and Nakhichevan to Iran — to the Persian Gulf ports — virtually all the republics of the Transcaucasus are being plunged into a blockade and are thus incurring appreciable losses. At the same time it is becoming impossible to organize transit traffic down the corridor linking eastern Turkey, Armenia, Nakhichevan, Iran, and the Persian Gulf (using the railroad artery between Istanbul, Erzurum, Gyumri, Yerevan, Nakhichevan, Dzhulfa, and on to Iran). Do Azerbaijan and Turkey stand to gain from that?

In this connection Russian and Georgian ties with Iran, which were in the past effected via the Transcaucasian route with its "outlet" through Armenia to Nakhichevan and Iran, are deteriorating. Prior to the collapse of the USSR this route was part of a transit container "bridge" linking the Union with the Gulf region: Around 115,000 containers per year were shipped in both directions, which benefited all the republics of the Transcaucasus in view of the transit revenue they obtained. This "bridge"

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is now standing idle: in the north owing to the situation in Abkhazia, and in the south owing to the Armenian-Turkish and Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes.

The fact that Ankara's "blockade" measures on the Turkish-Armenian border are making it impossible to implement Turkey's official proposal (April 1996) on the creation of an Economic Community of Countries of the Transcaucasus with the participation of Turkey and Iran is worthy of note. What is more, Russia is also being "cut off" from transit via Armenia and Turkey. The railroad to the CIS is also closed for the Gulf countries.

It is worthy of note that the tightening of the blockade on the Armenian-Turkish border was announced on the eve of Russian Federation Defense Minister Pavel Grachev's visit to Armenia and the signing of Russian-Armenian documents on military cooperation. However, the pretext chosen by Ankara to shut the Turkish-Armenian border "tight" is not entirely correct: There are not and never have been any Kurdish insurgents in the areas of Turkey adjoining what is now Armenia. Their main area of "activity" is southeastern Turkey (near that country's border with Iran, Iraq, and Syria). It was there in late April that Turkish troops mounted their latest offensive against the insurgents.

At the same time, by stepping up the blockade of Armenia on the pretext that "its territory is being used by Kurdish terrorists" (according to the official Ankara version), it is reasonable to expect an increase in Turkish-Armenian clashes: In effect Yerevan is being accused of indirectly backing the Kurdish separatists.

But Ankara's "offensive" did not end with the Armenian-Turkish border: In May Turkish Foreign Minster Emre Gonensay said that "Turkey will not permit Russian tankers to ship Kazakhstani oil through the Bosporus and Dardanelles." It was the same old pretext: the operational unreliability of the Russian tankers and their environmental unfriendliness (the week before this move, Moscow and Almaty had signed an agreement on the transit of Kazakhstani oil through Novorossiysk).

It is reasonable to ask: Might Turkey let through tankers carrying Kazakhstani oil under a different flag? The Turkish flag, for instance? After all, Mr. Gonensay's statement mentions Russian tankers (?). But no matter how you answer this question it is obvious that it is hardly possible to export any oil through Russia's Black Sea ports since maritime vessels can only "make their way" from there to the far abroad (to the Mediterranean, to be more precise) through the Black Sea and Aegean straits. Thus, Turkey has decided to violate the international conventions on freedom of navigation through these straits and has finally openly stated its true attitude toward the processes of integration in the Black Sea and Caspian region.

Ankara was effectively prompted to make these moves by the strengthening of Russian-Armenian and Russian-Kazakhstani relations. Consequently, Turkey's subsequent actions in this region will depend on how Russian Federation economic and political cooperation with the countries of the southern CIS develops.

Russia: Admiral Accuses Ukraine of 'U-Turn' on Sochi BSF Accords

LD2805171596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1123 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, May 28 (Interfax) — Admiral Igor Kasatonov, First Deputy Commander of the Russian Navy, has accused the Naval Command of Ukraine of the intention to "oust the Russian Black Sea Fleet [BSF] from Crimea". He made a statement to this effect, speaking in an interview with "Interfax" today.

On May 25-26, I. Kasatonov commissioned by the Russian Government was holding talks in Sevastopol with Ukrainian Navy Commander Vice Admiral Volodymyr Bezkorovaynyy on problems involved in the stationing of the Black Sea Fleet.

According to I. Kasatonov, although "Moscow has made maximum compromises, Kiev is trying to further limit operations by BSF units".

"Ukraine's Naval Command has made a U-turn on the Sochi accords. As a result, the Ukrainian version of the agreement says that Russia shall get several venues for deployment of her ships, instead of the main base in Sevastopol,", the Admiral went on to say.

In the meantime, the Admiral noted, Moscow "definitely insists that the two countries' fleets be divorced completely". It means that the Russian BSF alone shall remain in Sevastopol. The headquarters and vessels of the Ukrainian Navy shall be based in any other place, as is sealed in the Sochi agreement, the First Deputy Russian Navy Commander underlined.

He also said that Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin had approved in full the conclusions drawn by Russian seamen, and confirmed that the visit of the Russian head of state to Kiev could be paid only after resolution of problems pertaining to the BSF stationing.

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Political Issues

Russia: Medvedev Says Yeltsin Briefed Chernomyrdin on Chechen Visit

LD2805170396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1654 GMT 28 May 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin today returned to Moscow from Chechnya. The airplane of the Russian head of state landed in Moscow's Vnukovo-2 at 19.30 Moscow time on Tuesday.

Upon landing, the President met the Russian head of government at Vnukovo-2 airport.

The Russian President's press secretary Sergey Medvedev told Itar-Tass that Boris Yeltsin briefed Viktor Chernomyrdin on the results of his trip to the Chechen Republic, and the Prime Minister told him about the working consultations that were held in Moscow on Tuesday within the framework of talks between the federal delegation and the Yandarbiyev delegation.

The delegation of Chechen separatist leaders with Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev at the head left Moscow's Vnukovo-2 airport at 19.00 Moscow time, a mere 30 minutes before the landing of the presidential flight from Chechnya.

Yandarbiyev and his delegation left Moscow aboard a special flight for the village of Sleptsovskaya in the Ingush Republic.

Trust-worthy sources told Itar-Tass that the entire Yandarbiyev delegation left Moscow with their leader. Aboard the plane were Education Minister of the Republic of Ichkeria Khoj-Akhmed Yarikhanov, Vice-Speaker of the separatist parliament Said-Khasan Abdul Muslimov, Information Minister Movladi Udugov, the President's National Security Adviser Akhmed Zakayev, and Yandarbiyev's aide Hussein Biibulatov.

The flight is expected to reach destination around 22.00 Moscow time.

During talks in Moscow on Monday, the federal delegation and the Yandarbiyev group reached an agreement on the termination of combat activities in Chechnya from June 1 and on the exchange of all detained persons held by the warring parties.

On Tuesday, after consultations, Yandarbiyev decided to leave Moscow without giving a promised press conference.

President Yeltsin on Tuesday visited a village in Chechnya, 20 kilometers from Groznyy, and addressed the personnel of the 205th motor rifle division at Groznyy's Severniy Airport to thank the federal security forces in Chechnya for defending the country's sovereignty and declare that the Dudayev regime was over.

Russia: Yeltsin Dismisses Administrative Head of Bryansk Region

LD2905094896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0906 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin today issued a decree releasing from his post the head of the administration of Bryansk Region, Vladimir Barabanov.

As noted in the text of the decree, quoted by a report of the press service of the Russian president received today by ITAR-TASS, Vladimir Barabanov was released "for negligence in the execution of his duties, violation of Russian laws, for not using the federal budget funds for the purposes for which they were allocated, delays in payment of wages as well as for letting the socioeconomic situation deteriorate."

Russia: Seleznev Interviewed on Background, Interests

964F2278A Moscow SOBESEDNIK in Russian May 96 No 18, pp 3-4

[Interview with State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev by SOBESEDNIK correspondent Mikhail Serdyukov; place and date not given: "Gennadiy Seleznev: 'All You Hear Everywhere Is "No"'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [begin box] Gennadiy Seleznev was born in 1947. Born under the sign of Scorpio. Worked as a metalworker while attending evening school; served military service in the North; graduated from university. Has been editor in chief of SMENA, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, UCHITELSKAYA GAZETA, and PRAVDA newspapers. Deputy chairman of the previous Duma, chairman of the current one. Not a Stalinist. Has no intention of blowing up churches. Or restoring GULAG's. Hates extremism and terrorism. Mercilessly sarcastic when it comes to fools. Has no enemies. Never forgets friends. [end box]

Not many suspected this passion of State Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev, and only SOBESEDNIK today reveals the speaker's previously unknown love: He, an ardent lover of horseback riding, returned "to the saddle" a few days ago!

Gennadiy Nikolayevich has not been on a horse for 17 years. In the most literal sense: When a horse hoofs under its rider, when its moist lips afterwards search for sugar in man's hot palms... Anybody who gets a taste

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of horseback riding is finished for any other riding—even in an armored Mercedes, believes Seleznev. One can ride in a foreign wonder, but only strictly because business demands it. For pleasure—only a horse. As in the past...

The Past and the Duma

[Serdyukov] Your day begins...

[Seleznev] First—breakfast; then, alas, a cigarette. A cup of coffee, the newspapers.

[Serdyukov] Is KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA still the first one you open, just like many years ago?

[Seleznev] When I was its editor in chief (1980-1988—Auth.) it was logical, of course. Today I am interested first of all in IZVESTIYA as the most anticommunist newspaper.

[Serdyukov] What about SOBESEDNIK?

[Seleznev] Absolutely. It was created with my most direct participation.

[Serdyukov] Do you miss those times?

[Seleznev] I try not to regret anything. Especially aloud.

[Serdyukov] I heard that you sometimes had hard times at CPSU Central Committee meetings. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's circulation was mushrooming. Readers knew where to look for the most controversial and therefore most fascinating materials. The CPSU functionaries, however, were not elated.

[Seleznev] There were quite enough stress situations. But I would be lying if I said that I only had conflicts with the Central Committee. Yes, sometimes they stomped their feet in the "big house" and demanded that a particular journalist be punished for an "out-of-line article." I would say: "No! All you have the right to do is punish me." I even developed an ulcer because of this emotional stress. And was punished for my recalcitrance—I was stripped of my "Medal of Honor" order. For other "transgressions" I was dropped from the list of candidates for the post of first secretary of the VLKSM [All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League] Central Committee.

[Serdyukov] Did they take your order away?

[Seleznev] Things did not get that far—someone interfered. This is what happened: When I was editor in chief of the Leningrad newspaper SMENA I was recommended for an order on the occasion of some anniversary. But the newspaper at that time introduced a new rubric: "A Second Chance." For those who met fleetingly and did not have a chance to exchange telephone numbers and addresses. We helped. It turned out to be a nice, warm rubric. And then someone decided to earn points with the higher-ups and reported to Romanov, first secretary of the oblast party committee, that Seleznev was engaging in matchmaking...

[Serdyukov] In those times—in the 1970's! You should have been fired—for starters!

[Seleznev] For starters, they told me to cancel the "seditious" rubric. I dug my heels in.

[Serdyukov] The higher the boss, the more he does not like to be contradicted, right?

[Seleznev] Whether he likes it or not is of secondary importance. The important point is what you want to achieve by your objection. I do not have and have never had the shakes in front of high-ranking leaders.

[Serdyukov] And how about Yeltsin?

[Seleznev] I follow the same principle. I do not call Yeltsin to find out whether we will be drinking tea or coffee, after all. I call him only on business.

[Serdyukov] In the mid-1980's you were probably one of the most progressive editors in chief. In many respects, glasnost facilitated sometimes desperately frank materials in the newspaper you headed. One would think your place would be with democracy—the foremost among democrats! Instead, you became first secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee... Do you really intend to continue building communism in Russia?

[Seleznev] I really do. I do not understand: What is wrong with the idea of building a society of universal justice?

[Serdyukov] In December of last year you joined the elite of Russian statesmen. How and when did you become aware of this?

[Seleznev] You become aware of this when you talk face-to-face with the president, prime minister, or heads of foreign states. When you are trying to make all structures interested in having normal life finally come to Russia. Which, believe me, not only ordinary citizens dream of but also deputies and honest people in the executive branch. It is another matter that we envision different roads toward such a life.

[Serdyukov] Would you please be more precise—what kind of life?

[Seleznev] Stable. Predictable and natural, not a television show life of leisure.

[Serdyukov] You are at the very top now, Gennadiy Nikolayevich. It is all up to you!

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[Seleznev] But I—and with me, the whole deputy corps—constantly keep running into a blanket "no"!

[Serdyukov] Who says that?

[Seleznev] The Constitution. On one hand, I am supposedly an energetic, high-ranking person. And on the other—complete powerlessness in solving vital problems.

[Serdyukov] So, you are saying that your authority is meaningless?

[Seleznev] Representative authority cannot be meaningless, but when you constantly hear that there is no money in the treasury, you start thinking: This is it, finished!

[Serdyukov] What is the solution then? As is known, despair is the privilege of the weak...

[Seleznev] Why is it not possible to create, on the basis of our resources, a budget that will ensure a normal life for the people? Nobody in developed countries can understand how it can be that in rich Russia there are so many poor people. Any socioeconomic policy is worthless if the ranks of the disadvantaged grow instead of diminishing. And to say, as we do these days, that we have reached a turning point is immoral.

[Serdyukov] Nevertheless, you are frequently in contact with the president and prime minister. Judging from television, you do not at all look indignant...

[Seleznev] Television is most often protocol. You have to be reserved—you have no choice. But even outside the frame I do not at all squabble with the president or the prime minister. I learned a long time ago that one's own well-argued position is a key to any dialogue: It opens not only many doors but also people's hearts.

[Serdyukov] Do you think the president of Russia's heart can be opened with such a key?

[Seleznev] Judge for yourself. Did our president not come to an understanding that the situation in which people were not paid wages for months was hopeless? Has he not finally understood that it is not only meaningless but simply dangerous to build up anger in people? The ice is breaking! Yeltsin is beginning to live by the Communist Party's program, despite continuing to berate it.

[Serdyukov] So, are you an independent State Duma chairman or do you act in keeping with your party's decisions?

[Seleznev] No, I do not carry out CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] Presidium directives.

[Serdyukov] How can this be possible?

[Seleznev] I have a clear agreement with Gennadiy Zyuganov in this respect.

[Serdyukov] Are you not member of the party's leadership?

[Seleznev] All my responsibilities have been suspended. And although I am still member of the presidium, I am no longer a Central Committee secretary or editor in chief of PRAVDA ROSSII.

[Serdyukov] So, you are saying that Zyuganov does not give you directives before State Duma meetings?

[Seleznev] Out of the question.

[Serdyukov] In your opinion, what will change in the country after the hottest month of this year—June?

[Seleznev] Radically—a lot! I cannot predict what will happen with the Russian economy and finances, seeing how the whole president's team is throwing all the money into the payoff of arrears in wages and pensions. But the 17th of June will come. If Yeltsin wins—well, it is up to the people. But Boris Nikolayevich is already changing course. I am convinced he will also change his team.

[Serdyukov] And what if your friend and comrade Zyuganov wins? In all honesty, it is not he who is frightening but those who are around him. Anpilov, for instance. An obvious extremist. I hear that in the event a new government is formed, he is slated for the rather important post of people's control tsar...

[Seleznev] What does Anpilov have to do with it? What people's control? The way things are done in Russia is that in big politics everything depends on the first person. Zyuganov said absolutely clearly: If he becomes president of Russia, he will form a government of civil accord or people's confidence. The meaning of this is that candidates for high-ranking posts will not be chosen by the color of their party cards. All appointments will hinge only on personal competence and managerial skills.

[Serdyukov] Where is the guarantee that the selection of cadres for the new government will not follow the old proletarian model—callused hands, working-class origins, etc.? And what will happen to those who do not possess such qualities—execution?

[Seleznev] Nonsense; although, in my opinion, callused hands befit a man. And if they, on top of that , are accompanied by good brains and an honest heart!... The guarantee is in that people are terribly tired of political battles these days. To avoid them in the streets and squares, we will invite into the government people who take Russia's fate close to heart and who can manage,

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instead of lining their own pockets and buying up real estate abroad.

[Serdyukov] This is all wonderful. But when one remembers the same Anpilov... He says now that the first thing he will do when he comes to power will be to abolish the office of president...

[Seleznev] Well, the office of president cannot be abolished at will. It can only be done by adopting a new constitution. And only if it passes a referendum. Which means it will take two to three years to abolish the office of president. You know that I am also a supporter of a parliamentary republic.

[Serdyukov] And who will be head of state?

[Seleznev] A strong prime minister.

[Serdyukov] Is it not silly, though, to write a new constitution every several years? Your hands will get tired...

[Seleznev] The ordinary man in the street has never even glanced at the Constitution!... Either the old Union Constitution or the new one of Russia. But this is not the point. Recall how hastily the current Constitution was adopted. In essence, it was written to suit one man—the president.

A Statesman and a Father

[Serdyukov] The speaker is parliament's traffic controller. That's all. That is the way it is in England. What about here?

[Seleznev] In Russia, every notion is greater and broader. The speaker is no exception. But I am not the speaker—I am the chairman. I represent the Duma in other institutes of authority. I receive ambassadors, foreign delegations, and all sorts of guests of our state.

[Serdyukov] Are these meetings merely protocol, or is something decided there?

[Seleznev] Literally just before you arrived I had a conversation with the Iraqi ambassador. It turns out that 60-70 children die there every day just because they do not have the needed medicine. The embargo! A terrible situation. However, many international structures and foundations are ready to help and provide treatment. They are asking us to organize a Moscow-Baghdad air link. I got Chernomyrdin's approval—we will help...

So, if my functions were limited to the Duma's two plenary sessions and two councils a week, I would live like a king...

[Serdyukov] What do you mean?

[Seleznev] I would have time for a personal life. Go to the theater with my wife and daughter. And I definitely would have gone back to equestrian sport. There was a time when for four years in a row I competed in a triathlon. This was a long time ago, before military service. This is a very difficult sport: concours, steeplechase, breaking-in... I fell out of the saddle more than once. I bloodied myself a few times. After such incidents it is very difficult to force yourself to get back in the saddle.

[Serdyukov] What do you do for recreation then?

[Seleznev] Sunday is a sacred day. The whole family takes a walk in the woods. In any weather. This is wonderful.

[Serdyukov] Please, tell us about your family.

[Seleznev] To be honest, we do not want to let journalists into my family. It is enough that I am never left alone. I feel sorry for my family. There was a time when journalists began calling my home, interrogating my wife and daughter and getting rude. I had to change my telephone number. My family members also work, they get tired...

[Serdyukov] In what ways does your high position make their life easier?

[Seleznev] Easier? Only additional hassle! My women—my wife Irina and my daughter Tanya—are very independent persons. Tatyana did not get accepted to medical school after graduation from high school. We are all upset, of course. Friends advised: Call the rector—he will not refuse you! What kind of father are you, after all? But I had a deal with my daughter since her first grade in school: Whatever she wants in life, she will have to work for it herself. A year later, after attending courses, she did enter college, albeit a different one. She is now a social psychologist.

[Serdyukov] She took after mother?

[Seleznev] In many ways—yes. My wife teaches at a vocational school. Even I am envious of her determination. When she needed to learn to drive, she went to a driving school. Six months later she passed a driver's test. The behind-the-wheel test only on the second try, though. Now she sometimes gives me a ride in our old Zhiguli.

[Serdyukov] Do you not drive?

[Seleznev] I was in an accident when we lived in Leningrad, and totaled someone else's car. After that, I do not feel comfortable behind the wheel.

[Serdyukov] How did your family react to your appointment as State Duma chairman?

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[Seleznev] With apprehension. My household knows that I approach nothing formally—I am a workaholic. Now we do not see each other so often. We always liked visiting with friends and entertaining in our home. Now this is a big problem.

[Serdyukov] A problem for your security people?

[Seleznev] Right. I am an outgoing person by nature, used to doing what I please. Travel, go somewhere... Now I have ended up in the category of people called the "highest-ranking officials of state." This is regulated by law, and it is not for me to break it.

[Serdyukov] What does this law envisage?

[Seleznev] Security. Government communications. Advance warning of planned visits and meetings. All sorts of cables run to my home... In a way, it makes my own apartment a strange place for me. They tell me: Fine, we are not going to mess with it—move to a state residence and live there with the family. But we do not want to.

[Serdyukov] And they say that a man can get used to anything...

[Seleznev] I probably will. For instance, I take the presence of bodyguards more calmly now. I realized that people are willing to risk their lives to ensure the safety of mine.

[Serdyukov] These are guys from the Main Presidential Protection Administration. What do you think they do more: protect you or watch you?

[Seleznev] Their job is to protect me. I think they are honest officers and are doing precisely that.

[Serdyukov] By profession, you are a journalist. An observer of life. Do you sometimes observe yourself?

[Seleznev] Oh, yes. And frequently come to the bitter conclusion that I do the wrong thing! I consider myself an overly emotional person. Sometimes I say unfortunate things. Which means I am not in complete control of myself.

[Serdyukov] Do you have an image coordinator? A person who advises you what to wear on what occasion? You sometimes meet even with kings...

[Seleznev] There is a protocol service. But this is more for foreign trips. At home I can figure things out for myself. But there is a special person, a protocol specialist, who gives me hints.

[Serdyukov] For instance?

[Seleznev] My clothes must now be on the conservative side. Some people have noticed that I frequently wear a blazer, which is not appropriate for official meetings. But I am so used to a blazer! No, they say, the Duma is not the right place for such a British invention. Also, I like light colors. For some reason, however, they are not liked here.

[Serdyukov] So you actually have to wear a uniform of sorts. Are funds provided for it?

[Seleznev] Not as a special line item. But such expenses are envisaged. I have the right to buy, or have custom-made, a suit that for me would indeed constitute special clothing and which therefore I will be reimbursed for. As it is for ambassadors. I know, for instance, that I would never buy a black tie outfit for my own purposes. But if the occasion requires, I will have to.

[Serdyukov] It is cheaper to rent one at a theater!

[Seleznev] So far, there not have been such occasions. Thank you for the advice, though—I will keep it in mind.

[Serdyukov] As I sit here and listen to you I get a feeling that the Duma chairman's life is nothing but hassle...

[Seleznev] Just a regular job... But, for instance, I have always felt imposed upon by the dress code requiring light-colored shirts. At KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA life was easy in this respect: On Saturday, you could show up in jeans and a lightweight jacket. I thought that in the Duma, too, I could show up in comfortable clothes on Saturdays...

[Serdyukov] And?

[Seleznev] You cannot do it!

Adventures Continue!

[Serdyukov] Are there events you remember with terrible fear and joy? Have you had adventures in your life, Gennadiy Nikolayevich?

[Seleznev] Quite a few.

[Serdyukov] Can you recall the most exciting one?

[Seleznev] No need to scratch my head over this. The flight to the North Pole.

[Serdyukov] You are probably the only speaker in the world who has been at the tip of the globe. Have you contacted the Guinness Book of Records? It should be entered in it...

[Seleznev] I am the only one. But in the capacity of editor in chief of a mass-circulation youth newspaper. It so happened that KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA began to organize the first high-latitude expeditions to the North Pole. One of them was international. From our side was the ski team led by Dmitriy Shparo. From

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the other side—Canadians. They agreed to meet at the geographic North Pole.

[Serdyukov] This is some fun!

[Seleznev] Much better than what people do today, killing each other in hot spots or from behind a corner.

[Serdyukov] Did you also ski?

[Seleznev] I was the expedition headquarters chief. I believed it my duty to visit the ice pack. To face the strong Arctic winds, take a risk, after all.

[Serdyukov] Did you risk your life?

[Seleznev] No more than the others—probably less. This is inevitable in high latitudes. I traveled to the pole first by plane, then by helicopter. The skiers, however, moved over the drifting ice on foot. Each movement was fraught with danger. But nobody was afraid. It is not accidental that many of those heroic men from the Shparo team are world-famous celebrities. Hero of Russia Misha Malakhov, and the tireless lone walker Fedor Konyukhov. Their names are in the Guinness Book of Records. There were other, lesser known people too in that group of celebrities, but equally fearless and determined. For instance, our heroic journalist Volodya Snegirev, the enthusiastic organizer of all expeditions to the Arctic. (Who, by the way, among his other endeavors, was for a while SOBESEDNIK editor in chief.—Auth.) But it all started back then, in the 1980's. We set "modest" goals: Measure human capacity in conditions of an all-round extreme situation.

[Serdyukov] Have you personally accomplished this goal?

[Seleznev] Polar station SP-29 was drifting next to the pole. Suddenly the ice-floe started breaking. It became necessary to immediately evacuate the station. We had at the time an experimental plane AN-74—a unique jet aircraft. They landed on an ice-floe and Loaded the aircraft to the roof: equipment, sacks, people. All the while, the floe was turning and shaking. As we were about to take off, one-third of the ice airfield broke away.

[Serdyukov] Did the thought flicker through your mind: This is the end?

[Seleznev] The situation was dramatic. We knew that unless we took off right away, we would be stuck there forever—we would be lucky to sink right away in the coldest ocean in the world. But how do you take off when there is practically no take-off strip left? I mentally said good-bye to my family, and we began to take off. I was absolutely calm. It is just that you suddenly physically sense how fragile human life is... The Antonov Design Bureau's test pilots turned out to be real virtuosos. After the takeoff, they took off their leather jackets, and at first I did not grasp why the pilots' white shirts had dark backs. From sweat, from tension—but their faces remained calm. The flight to Sredniy Island was accompanied by passengers' singing. The crew captain was Sergey Gorbik. I will never forget him—he saved my life, among others. He was a man of exceptional courage and abilities. He later died testing a new aircraft...

[Serdyukov] What did you find most striking at the North Pole?

[Seleznev] How silent and pristine it is. You have a romantic adventure, tests, and all sorts of thoughts here. Afterwards, you miss this feeling for the rest of your life.

[Serdyukov] Even when you are State Duma chairman, which, obviously, also provides its exciting moments?

[Seleznev] Especially when you are chairman...

Military Issues

Russia: Yeltsin 'Unlikely' To Fire Grachev Before Elections

LD2805135496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1347 GMT 28 May 96

[By Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 28 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin is unlikely to dismiss his Defence Minister Pavel Grachev before June 16 presidential elections, according to an informed source in the presidential entourage.

"At present the situation is extremely unfavorable and the President would hardly undertake major personnel reshuffling before elections", the source told Tass on Tuesday.

Russian media rumoured that Yeltsin might dismiss Grachev during or after his trip to Chechnya and the rumours became especially strong after Yeltsin met Boris Gromov, ex-deputy of Grachev who was dismissed for criticising the war in Chechnya, and discussed future army reform with him.

But Yeltsin told the military in Groznyy on Tuesday that he would not blame them for mistakes and miscalculations in the Chechen conflict.

"I am not shaking the blame off myself", he told the personnel of the 205th rifle brigade in Groznyy.

"I shall not put /the blame for/ political miscalculations on the shoulders of the Russian military, it is they who

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played the decisive role in suppressing the mutineers", he added.

The Kremlin source explained Grachev's absence at Monday talks with Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev by saying that the minister had left for Groznyy to prepare Yeltsin's trip.

He also denied rumours that Yeltsin had timed his trip to Chechnya to Yandarbiyev's stay in Moscow. The source said the trip had been planned for today long ago.

Russia: Yeltsin 'Might' Replace Grachev With Gromov 'Today'

MK2905115096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 May 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Ilya Maksakov: "Today the Russian President Might Announce the Dismissal of the Defense Minister. Yeltsin Visited Groznyy, Leaving Yandarbiyev in Moscow"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] On the evening of the same day Boris Yeltsin left Chechnya. On his visit to Chechnya, the head of state was accompanied by Oleg Lobov, the Russian Federation president's representative in the republic; Anatoliy Kulikov, internal affairs minister; Emil Pain, member of the State Commission on a Settlement in Chechnya; Sergey Stepashin, secretary of the State Commission on Chechnya; Yuriy Baturin, national security adviser to the Russian Federation president; Sergey Shakhray, chairman of the presidential Commission on the Delimitation of the Subjects of Jurisdiction and Powers Between the Federation Components, and also Pavel Grachev, Russian defense minister, whose situation calls for special attention.

The fact is that, according to our sources, today Boris Yeltsin is planning to present Boris Gromov as the new head of the defense department to participants in a conference of senior command personnel of all armed services of the Russian military forces which opened in Moscow. Sources in the presidential staff say that during the past three weeks private talks have been held with representatives of Russian service commanders concerning their attitude to the new candidacy. According to our sources, Pavel Grachev will not be left without a job, one apparently devised for him to suit his professional qualities. Read more about Grachev's future fate in tomorrow's issue of NEZAVISIMOYE VOYENNOYE OBOZRENIYE.

Meanwhile, Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov said, under the agreements reached at the negotiations, all forcibly held civilians and military servicemen are to be freed within two weeks. To this end the negotiating commission is to continue its work, and the mechanism for the implementation of the military part of the agreement, which was developed earlier, is to be activated. [passage omitted]

Ichkeria leaders pressed home their demands for bilateral negotiations. However, Salambek Maigov, cochairman of the Coordinating Council of Chechnya's Sociopolitical Organizations, said that there is "too much euphoria" around the achieved accords and that it is too early to make any conclusions yet. According to Maigov a cease-fire as of 1 June will be impossible unless political issues are addressed simultaneously, one of them being the legal capacity of the Chechen resistance movement.

In this context the implementation of the peace agreement, the Chechen politician believes, is linked with the question of the Zavgayev pro-Moscow administration — especially considering that the Groznyy authorities are now trying to form a new legislative power agency: the National Assembly. Without addressing these matters, the Moscow accords will appear as a capitulation, because they should serve as a basis for the solution of political problems.

Furthermore, Salambek Maigov is convinced that Boris Yeltsin has achieved his main strategic objective: He presented the cease-fire agreement to the Russian public as the end of the war. On the other hand, the Chechen resistance forces are basically upholding their right to self-determination, and if these matters are not approached on a compromise basis, no agreements will be of any help here.

Russia: Grachev Accuses Generals of Undermining His Position

LD2905092296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0758 GMT 29 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May (Itar-Tass) — According to Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, some generals are trying to undermine his position by artificially fuelling the rumors about staff reshuffles in the Defense Ministry. Addressing today's all-army conference of top commanders of the Russian Armed Forces, Grachev said that these generals had no honor.

Grachev said that while he had been touring the Urals, Siberia, and Transbaykal, a lieutenant-general, whose name Grachev did not disclose, had come to see Yeltsin to offer him a plan for reforming the army and the navy. The general said he would implement the plan if he was given the post of defence minister.

One look at the plan was enough to establish that it was a plan which had been drawn up by the the

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Russian Armed Forces General Staff. However, the general claimed it was his own plan.

Grachev also expressed indignation in connection with the fact that there was another wave of reports in the press which discredit the Armed Forces and the top commanders.

Grachev said that President Yeltsin's trip to Chechnya on 28 May and his address to the troops and the local population showed that the Armed Forces were reliably protecting Russia's national interests and ensuring its security.

Russia: Grachev Says External Threat 'Still Remains'

LD2905113896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said an external threat to Russia still remains, while its interests are often ignored in a new political environment.

Speaking at an expanded meeting of the Defense Ministry's leadership in Moscow on Wednesday, Grachev noted that NATO leaders have repeatedly stated their readiness to establish a special relationship with Russia. However, "we have every reason to believe that NATO understands this [special relationship] in a very peculiar way," he said.

The North Atlantic Alliance "is seeking to become the core of a future security system for the continent," Grachev said.

The alliance wants to move eastward, and the accession of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia to NATO "will exceed the established limit by almost 15,000 pieces of military hardware," he added.

"The deployment of tactical weapons in Eastern Europe is fraught if not with a new Cold War, then at least with a Cold Peace," the minister noted.

According to Grachev, Russia's fundamental position on NATO's expansion to the East does not mean that "we are ready to turn our back on the alliance."

"We are ready for constructive cooperation in the interests of peace. We have such experience from Bosnia, Tajikistan, Karabakh and Abkhazia," he said.

Grachev pointed to attempts by some countries to hamper integration among CIS states, seeing their strategic goal in the reduction of Russia's influence in the Black Sea region, Trancaucasia and Central Asia and in preventing former Soviet republics from rallying around Russia.

In addition, there have been incessant attempts to make Central and Transcaucasian republics adopt a hostile attitude towards Russia, he said.

Grachev said President Boris Yeltsin is expected to address the expanded meeting at 1530 (1130 GMT).

Russia: Yeltsin Praises Contribution of Defense Industries

LD2905111996 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting of the national armed forces opened in Moscow today. In the afternoon the participants will hear Boris Yeltsin. In the morning the president took part in the Russia-wide meeting of the defence industry staff. The head of state noted positive changes in Russia's arms exports, having stressed that in many countries we have put under pressure our competitors from the United States.

[Begin Yeltsin recording] The position and role of Russia in the world, as a great power, is determined in many respects by the highest level of our defense industry. Many types of its output considerably surpass foreign counterparts. The transfer to the market has badly hit the defense industry. But even in these complex conditions it has been possible to preserve the main bulk of our potential in science, technology, and manufacturing. I believe that this is thanks to the great contribution made by labor collectives, directors, and chief engineering designers of defense enterprises and organizations. The most important task today is to work out measures to enable the defense industry to reach new levels and to become a highly efficient sector in the national economy. I see the main task of this conference in defining the main ways of resolving this problem. The conversion of military production must not by any means reduce the defense capability of the country. The industry's unique potential in science and technology must be used to the maximum both in the interests of the country's defense capability and in order to manufacture dual-purpose and civilian output. [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin To Address Armed Forces Meeting

LD2905084696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0434 GMT 29 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 29 May (Itar-Tass) — An Army-wide conference of leading staff from Russia's Armed Forces, in which the supreme commander-in-chief [Yeltsin] is expected to take part, is starting in Moscow. Observers told ITAR-TASS at the information directorate of the Russian Federation Ministry of

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Defense that troop commanders from the military districts, fleet and flotilla commanders, and representatives of military groups and groupings had arrived in the Russian capital.

The results of the winter combat training of the troops and the tasks facing the army and fleet in the summer training period will be summed up at the conference.

According to information received at the military department, the supreme commander-in-chief, Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, is to make a speech at the conference. He is expected to put forward his ideas on military reform and his views on the further development of the armed forces.

Officials close to Army General Pavel Grachev, Russia's minister of defense, denied that there was any likelihood of changes of cadres in the department's upper echelons.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Edict on Civil Defense

LD2805192996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1543 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree on Russia's civil defence on Tuesday [28 May].

The decree defines civil defence troops as part of security forces intended for protection of Russian territory and the population in war- and peace-time emergencies related to industrial accidents and natural disasters.

A presidential press service spokesperson told ITAR-TASS that Yeltsin has signed regulations on civil defence troops, mandating their structure and command.

First Deputy Minister for Emergency Situations Yuriy Vorobev said the presidential decree provides a law basis for civil defence services, with the draft law on civil defence stalling in the State Duma for years.

Vorobev said the decree makes a law the use by the ministry of its crucially important tool, the civil defence troops.

The decree lays down size and tasks of the troops as part of the national security network.

Under the decree, size of the troops, now numbering 20,000, is to be built up to 50,000 by 2000.

Also by 2000 the troops will be manned on a volunteer basis.

Vorobev said the presidential decree is bound to improve the performance and equipment of the troops and update the Russian civil defence system.

Russia: Production 'Crisis' Slows in Military Industrial Complex

LD2705103796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0924 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 27 (Interfax) — The deep crisis in Russia's military industrial complex continues growing but more slowly, deputy chief of the economics department of the Defense Industry Ministry of Russia Vitaliy Vitebskiy told Interfax with regard to the industry's progress in April.

According to him, the total production volume of Russian defense enterprises continued falling in April 1996 and amounted to 82.7 percent compared to April 1995.

Production volume in April mostly decreased in the communications industry (66.3 percent) against April 1995, in the electronics industry — 75.3 percent and in the armaments sector — 76.6 percent.

Output of civilian products on a year ago stood at a mere 77.4 percent. Output of military products also fell to 93.4 percent of what was produced in April 1995.

The number of workers of the Defense Industry Ministry fell by 14.0 percent in March 1996 against the same month of 1995, while the average monthly wages at the MIC enterprises did not exceed 515,000 rubles (from 354,000 rubles in the electronics industry to 667,000 in the ship-building industry), though in the national economy the wages amounted to 745,000 rubles, in industry — 872,000 rubles, and in machine-building — 570,000 rubles.

The current situation requires immediate and radical steps to sustain the industry, Vitebsky. Unless these steps are taken, Russia will face the presidential elections with an idle defense industry. He expressed great hopes for the success of an industry conference in Moscow on May 29 at which delegates will discuss possible ways of pulling the defense industry out of the crisis.

Russia: New Su-37 Vectored-Thrust Aircraft Shown on TV

MM2905100996 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1600 GMT 25 May 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast: Video report from Zhukovskiy by A. Samoletov, identified by caption]

[FBIS Translated Text] [161933] [Announcer to camera] Flight tests of a Sukhoy aircraft are drawing to a close at the Zhukovskiy airfield. This machine is 15 years ahead of other designs. Its designation is Su-37.

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[161946] [Samoletov over video of aircraft on runway, file footage of vectored-thrust engine on display at an airshow] The vectored-thrust engine, which has been shown at various airshows and which enables aircraft to fly in virtually any direction, including backwards [kilem vpered], is nonetheless only an experimental engine which has until now been installed only on experimental models of aircraft. The Sukhoy Design Bureau has built the world's first series produced aircraft equipped with such an engine. There has long been talk about the Su-37. However, so far it has not been possible to see the new machine, which was being built in conditions of heightened secrecy. Today the new Sukhoy, tail number 711, is preparing for demonstration flights, following which the question of the purchase of this hardware for the Russian Air Force will be addressed.

As regards future promising designs of this company, the Sukhoy Design Bureau, given normal funding, will clearly be setting the tone in aircraft fashion in the sphere of fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft. Furthermore, according to experts, the new sixth-generation Sukhoy will have no rivals in the world market for some considerable time, despite Western attempts to present their designs as aircraft of the 21st century. [162052] [video shows aircraft taxiing, airshow display of vectored-thrust engine, close-up of taxiing aircraft, two aircraft in flight, aircraft being towed and taxiing again]

Regional Affairs

Russia: Chechnya To Become 'Sovereign' State Within Russia

LD2905110396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1040 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 29 (Interfax) — The Chechen Republic shall have its constitution and full state authority on its territory, excepting those powers specifically delegated by Chechnya to the Russian Federation, according to a draft power-sharing agreement received by Interfax.

The document proclaims the status of Chechnya as a sovereign, democratic, law-governed and social state within Russia.

The document's preamble says Russia and Chechnya sign the agreement proceeding from the "universally recognized right of peoples to self-determination, principles of equality, voluntariness and free expression of will, in order to ensure territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and unity of economic space, ... rejecting the use of force or threat of force in solution of any issues."

Under the draft agreement, the Chechen republic is competent to settle all domestic issues, including order, lawfulness and public safety on Chechen territory, adoption and changing of the Chechen constitution and laws, administrative-territorial division, the republican budget and taxes, disposal of natural resources of Chechnya and property located on its territory with the exception of federal property.

The Chechen authorities also have the right to tackle the problems of republican citizenship, alternative civilian service on territory of the Chechen republic and a special procedure of military service in military educational establishments and military construction units.

The draft gives the Chechen leadership the right to sign agreements and treaties with other constituent members of the Russian Federation, as well as international agreements and treaties that do not run counter to the constitution and international obligations of the Russian Federation and this agreement, institute state awards and honorary titles of the Chechen republic.

Under the draft agreement Russia shall be responsible for foreign policy, international and foreign economic relations of Russia, international treaties of Russia, questions of peace and war, defense and security, defense production, setting procedures trade in arms, ammunition, materiel and other military property, federal transport, communications and information.

Moscow shall introduce the legal basis for a common market, fundamentals for price policy, financial, currency, credit and customs regulation and monetary emission.

The draft agreement outlines joint competence of Russia and Chechnya. These are protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia, fulfillment of Russian international agreements, development and fulfillment of programs against crime, location and movement of military units on Chechen territory, formation of free customs zones in Chechnya and others. The draft provides for a possible free economic zone in Chechnya.

It ensures measures of state support for political, social and spiritual revival of the Chechen people.

Under the draft agreement, "laws and other normative acts of the Chechen republic which were not brought in correspondence with federal legislation cannot be used."

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Russia: Yeltsin: Chechnya 'Slowly Moving Towards Internal Peace'

LD2805173796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1726 GMT 28 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] President Boris Yeltsin arrived on a day's visit to the Chechen capital Groznyy on Tuesday [28 May]. He meets the residents of the city and nearby villages and Russian troops deployed in that republic. He also visited the deployment site of Russia's 205th motorized brigade stationed in a city suburb.

In a speech to the meeting of public representatives in Groznyy, Yeltsin said the road to restoring peace and constitutional legality to Chechnya was open.

He said there has been no peace, security or conditions for normal life in the republic for almost five years describing the Chechen crisis as Russia's biggest pain.

Yeltsin said the whole of Russia wanted to see the Chechen problem resolved and a long-awaited peace come to the republic.

He said Chechnya was the only Russian autonomy where Moscow had to resort to extreme measures in the wake of a coup d'etat carried out by Chechen separatists. He said civilians fell the main victim to local terrorism, particularly members of the local Russian-speaking community.

Yeltsin spoke of the Chechen economy being totally ruined while the republic's health, education, science and social security system were practically non-existent.

He said next door regions fell prey to a string of lootings, hostage taking and arson attacks and pointed to the despicable tragedies of Budennovsk and Kizlyar as examples shaking Russia and the world at large.

Yeltsin said the rebels had turned Chechnya into a haven of criminals from Russia and terrorists from other countries. In this connection, he said, it became clear that the criminal regime grabbing power in Chechnya must be wiped out in order to protect the civilians, restore law and order to the republic, peace and calm to North Caucasus and keep Russia in one piece.

Yeltsin admitted to his own mistakes in handling the situation saying he did not want the Russian military "who played a decisive role in subduing the rebels" to shoulder the blame of political blunders. "The army must not take political decisions, let alone bear the responsibility for executing orders," the Russian leader said.

Yeltsin thanked Russian troops for a display of "heroism and courage" saying they routed the main rebel force and practically crushed any resistance. He said negotiation is now under way with all political groups of Chechnya, including the leaders of more intransigent rebel units.

The president said the Russian government and a rebel delegation led by Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev meeting in Moscow on Monday reached agreement on a ceasefire to come into force from June 1 and the release of prisoners on both sides in a period of two weeks while the commissions for talks continue their work.

Yeltsin said Moscow had begun pulling out troops to their permanent deployment sites.

In the meantime, the Moscow-backed Chechen government is carrying out intensive work to enlarge peace zones and reinstate government bodies on the ground including police.

Yeltsin believes the republic is slowly moving towards internal peace. He said the Chechen government had managed to hold an assembly of people's representatives and draw up a treaty on peace and accord.

The president pointed to a substantial role played by the government commission for Chechnya headed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. "It can be said with all certainty that the Chechen peace plan is now at work," Yeltsin said. But he warned against a repeat of last year's mistake which allowed the rebels to recover their strength. "Politicians have no right to let down again the Russian army and civilians who cannot be made hostage to ill-thought decisions," he said.

Yeltsin sees the holding of fair and free elections in Chechnya as a vital condition for a political settlement there. He insists these must be held in a democratic way under the supervision of international observers. He also believes it necessary to start drafting a republican constitution which must incorporate the question of a special status of Chechnya within the Russian Federation.

On more immediate priorities, Yeltsin called for concerted effort in postwar reconstruction of the republic's economy and social infrastructures. The question of whether the regional violence stops or renews will now depend on the republican government, he said.

Yeltsin said that over 3 million square meters of housing was rebuilt in Chechnya last year as well as were 54,000 school seats and about 1,900 hospital beds. He said a lump sum of relief aid and compensation were being paid to civilians affected by the war.

The Russian government approved a reconstruction program planning to spend more than 16 trillion rubles to

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this end in 1996. At the same time, legal conditions are being set up to finance reconstruction work, industrial recovery and a flow of investment to Chechnya.

But the president threatened tough measures to counter any attempt at a resumption of criminal activities in the republic, with Chechen police "designed to play an increasingly bigger role" in the law enforcement,.

Yeltsin spoke of being convinced after meetings with local villagers that Chechen civilians were opposed to the war and violence. He gave reassurances that neither himself nor the Russians have ever tried to put an equal mark between the criminal regime and Chechen people or between "professional terrorists" and those who took up arms led by revenge or a false idea.

In this connection, Yeltsin said he issued a decree on amnesty to all rebels apart from those involved in violent crimes.

In conclusion, the president expressed confidence that most Chechens were in support of friendship with the Russians and other peoples of Russia, restoring law and order to Chechnya, a strong republican government and overcoming the after-effects of the armed conflict. "It is within our own power to cut short the road to peace in Chechnya," Yeltsin said.

He conferred government awards to a group of local residents for their feat in the Second World War.

The president is expected to fly back to Moscow late on Tuesday.

Russia: Yeltsin Cited on Rebuilding Program for Chechnya

LD2805134596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1211 GMT 28 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groznyy, 28 May (ITAR-TASS) — "The way is open to the restoration of peace and constitutional legality on the territory of the Chechen Republic," said Russian President Boris Yeltsin, addressing the personnel of the 205th Russian Motorized Rifle Brigade today. Noting that there is not, and never has been, a simple path to a solution to the Chechen problem, Boris Yeltsin singled out as one of the landmarks toward peace the adoption of a program to settle the Chechen crisis which, he said, has been consistently implemented over the past two months.

Boris Yeltsin recalled that talks with all the political forces in Chechnya, including the leaders of the so-called "irreconcilable" [opposition], are being held within the framework of this program. The head of state gave information on the results of the meetings in Moscow on Monday, as well as the accords which were reached.

Regarding the practical aspects of their implementation, Boris Yeltsin spoke of the progress of the stage-by-stage withdrawal of federal forces from Chechnya to their places of permanent deployment until September 1996.

Speaking about other means of implementing the program for a settlement to the Chechnya crisis, Boris Yeltsin touched on the active moves of the Chechen leadership to extend the zones of accord, security, and peace. He said that the process of the reestablishment of state power bodies on the territory of Chechnya, including law enforcement agencies, is also playing a big part.

At the same time, Boris Yeltsin said, one of the most important factors is the progress of the Chechen Republic toward "internal accord". Among other things, Boris Yeltsin stressed the important significance of the recent assembly of representatives of the Chechen people, thanks to which a treaty was prepared on peace and accord, which is ready for signing.

Boris Yeltsin spoke favorably about the State commission for a settlement to the crisis in Chechnya, which is headed by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Summing up these events, the head of state stressed that "one may say quite definitely that the plan for a peaceful settlement in the Chechen Republic is working."

Russia: Yandarbiyev Comments on Results of Meeting With Yeltsin

LD2805211596 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 28 May 96

[From the "Segodnya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received a statement from Zelimkhan Yanderbiyev, head of the Chechen delegation, who spent the whole day in Moscow and returned to Ingushetia a short while ago.

[Begin recording] [Yandarbiyev] Well, I did not get the impression that I was a hostage. I would not like to comment on the actions of the president of such a huge country who made a so-called visit in such a way.

[Unidentified correspondent] Were you, in any case, informed that he was heading for Chechnya?

[Yandarbiyev] No. Absolutely not. If anyone else has a question please ask it.

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[Correspondent] Then I will ask another question if I may?

[Yandarbiyev] By all means.

[Correspondent] In your opinion, what is the real result?

[Yandarbiyev] The result is this. I have already told you. First, we accepted the so-called agreement which says in the preamble that the parties reject the use of force and the threat of force to resolve any issue which arises between the parties. That is the first thing and the first point notes that all military operations and everything connected to the war will end on 1 June. The second point says that an exchange of persons being forcedly detained — that is to say POW's — will take place within two weeks of the signing. And the third point says that the commission will continue its work — that means the state commission of the Russian Federation on finding a settlement for the Chechen Republic. There was an oral agreement that the issue of withdrawing troops would be settled by the commission today but for a number of reasons of both an objective and subject nature, especially of a subjective nature depending on the Russian leadership, we did not resolve this issue but we exchanged [passage indistinct] [end recording]

Russia: Yandarbiyev 'Can Guarantee Nothing' Despite Agreement

LD2805204096 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1800 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ruslan Martagov, press secretary of the head of Chechnya, has told Ekho Moskvy that the situation in Chechnya had not changed after the signing of the agreement. Martagov believes this is because Yandarbiyev is no authority for the entire armed opposition.

[Begin Martagov recording] We have already had one precedent of talks which for us ended with the destruction of Sernovodsk, (?Novogroznenskiy), and Gudermes. These are major towns and settlements, you know. They had experienced no destruction whatsoever since the winter of 1994-95 of the military campaign. And we had thousands more casualties then. This is one thing. And another thing is that he [Yandarbiyev] is no authority for the majority of field commanders and militants. He can guarantee nothing. He was just taken to Moscow where he sat down at a table and signed. So what is the point in all of this? As for Yandarbiyev's standing, on the one hand, it will be enhanced among some militants, but on the other hand, others will be greatly annoyed with him. That is it. [end recording]

Russia: Yandarbiyev Not Willing To Commit to Implementing Agreement

LD2805185096 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 28 May 96

[Telephone report by correspondent Vladimir Luskanov from Nazran, Ingushetia — live; from the "Segodnya" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] At exactly 2130 the aircraft carrying the Chechen delegation made a smooth landing at Sleptsovsk Airport. The head of the delegation, Zelimkhan Yanderbiyev, looks self-assured and firm after two days of talks in Moscow.

At this minute, hundreds of people are marking Yandarbiyev's return on the approaches to the airport with cries, detonations, and shots. The members of the Chechen delegation made a protest in the airport at Moscow's refusal to allow them to hold a news conference on the results of the talks in Moscow. They summed up the results on the runway of Sleptsovsk Airport.

Yandarbiyev is happy with the results of his trip. According to him, President Boris Yeltsin today has a real chance of ending the war. The head of the Chechen delegation thinks that he has made all the necessary concessions to Yeltsin. Yandarbiyev believes that the main thing is that the cease-fire agreement has been signed.

However, he does not commit himself to saying that this agreement will be implemented. Asked if he had not felt himself a hostage in Moscow, the head of the Chechen delegation said that he had not considered himself a hostage but had conducted two days of fruitful talks.

According to Yandarbiyev, consultations with the federal authorities will be continued in the next few days at the level of two special government commissions.

Russia: Yandarbiyev, Delegation Depart Moscow for Ingushetia

LD2805154596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1507 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 28 May (Itar-Tass) — At 1900 [1500 GMT] today Yandarbiyev's delegation left the capital's Vnukovo-2 airport on a special flight for Ingushetia. The plane is headed for the Cossack village of Sleptsovskaya. The delegation includes: Khozh-Akhmed Yarikhanov, minister of education of the "Republic of Ichkeria", Said-Khasan Abdul Muslimov, deputy speaker of parliament, Movladi Udugov, minister of information, Akhmed Zakayev,

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aide to the "President of Ichkeria" for national security and Khuseyn Biybulatov, adviser to the president. The flight will last approximately three hours.

During the talks in Moscow on Monday, an agreement was signed to halt combat actions in Chechnya from 1 June and returning all unlawfully-held persons.

Russia: Zhirinovskiy: Chechen War To Continue After 16 Jun

LD2805165896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1151 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Interfax) — Presidential candidate and leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has a negative attitude to the agreement reached by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev on a cease-fire in Chechnya as of midnight on May 31.

The cease-fire will be observed only until the presidential elections, scheduled for June 16, after which "the wind will return again according to his circuit," he told reporters in the State Duma on Tuesday.

The war in Chechnya is not over, because "its goal — a civil war in Russia — has not yet been attained," he said.

He described the talks and the cease-fire agreement as one more political gimmick.

Russia: Military Said Downbeat on Cease-Fire Pact

MM2805165096 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 May 96 p 2

[Article by Valeriy Yakov: "The Military and the Chechen Diaspora Are in No Hurry To Celebrate Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The agreement on a complete cessation of combat operations in Chechnya as of 00 hours 1 June concluded between the government commission and the Yandarbiyev delegation in the Kremlin inspires the greatest hope of an end to the war in the 18 months of its duration. Never before has peace in Chechnya been as realistic as today. But the swiftness with which the agreement was signed and the unexpected renunciation by the sides of any preconditions do give rise to fears that the peace could on this occasion too turn into a mere truce.

The Defense Ministry leadership was restrained in its attitude to the concluded agreement and responded without enthusiasm to our request for a comment on the event. They simply explained that regulations do not allow any discussion of the actions of a superior officer, and if the commander in chief — the president — issues the order for combat operations to cease, the Army is duty-bound to obey the command. Without discussion. At least officially. But unofficially the generals again cited last year's peace agreements. At that time too only a few steps remained before the guerrillas' complete destruction, but the Army was halted and the order issued to return to its initial positions. As a result, the guerrillas received the opportunity to recover, take a breather, restock their arsenals, and regain their lost positions.

I was reminded in connection with all this of Pavel Grachev's revelations in IZVESTIYA last year. In an unofficial conversation on board a plane the defense minister related to me at the time certain details of his meeting with Dudayev on the eve of the war, when the Chechen president told Grachev with a smile that he did not fear a war with Russia. For the simple reason that Moscow would not allow the Russian Army to finish the Chechen Army off. That is just what happened last summer. The same thing has happened at the start of this summer. But whereas a year ago we could only speculate as to who had saved the Chechen formations from utter destruction and why, the answer today is clear: They have been saved by the presidential election. That, I repeat, is the military's unofficial reaction.

Dzhabrail Gakayev, the well-known scholar and professor of political science, the coordinator of Russia's Chechen diaspora, which unites the several hundred thousand Chechens living in 42 regions of the country, was also very restrained in his attitude to the agreement: "This event is certainly long awaited and positive," he said during our conversation. "But, unfortunately, it cannot be ruled out either that everything that is happening is no more than tactical moves by the president in his election campaign and by Yandarbiyev, who is seeking to make a mark for himself in the political process." According to Gakayev, all the objective prerequisites for an end to the bloodshed in Chechnya existed a month ago and even a year ago, but it is only now, on the eve of the election, that the Kremlin has decided to hold a direct dialogue with those they are fighting. Be that as it may, the Chechen diaspora hopes that peace will really ensue this time and that the lives of thousands of Russians will no longer be sacrificed for the sake of political expediency and Kremlin intrigue.

The unprecedented security measures which surrounded the Yandarbiyev delegation frankly bewildered Moscow's diaspora. It turns out that the Presidential Security Service and the Main Protection Directorate cut off not only the press but everyone else from the guerrilla leaders, completely precluding the possibility of any contact whatsoever between Dudayev's

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followers and the public and the press. And it was only on the morning of 28 May that it became clear why the Chechen delegation had looked more like a group of arrestees whom they had transported around Moscow under reinforced protection with the intention of leaving them for another couple of days at some terribly high-security facility — virtually the equivalent of a foreign intelligence base — supposedly to agree the details of the agreement. In actual fact the Russian authorities, in the best traditions of the Basayev school, were using the Yandarbiyev group as hostages during Yeltsin's rapid visit to Chechnya. The Presidential Security Service and all the other special services, which are apparently not very sure of their own ability to protect the head of state from a crazed gunman in troubled Chechnya, kept the gunmen's leaders back home in a rear area as guarantors of the safety of the guarantor of the Constitution.

It also has to be noted that, according to the president's press secretary, Boris Yeltsin did not sign the peace agreement but was merely present during the signing as guarantor. It is no accident, I think, that he warned those present that each of them would be found if the accord were broken. The president understands, of course, that UFO's bombing Chechen villages could again appear over Chechnya at any time necessary if the accord were broken. And there could again be a long and unsuccessful search for those to blame. Lasting at least until the second round of the elections. Or even the third.

But for the time being all that is happening induces admiration as a superb, swiftly executed ploy by the authorities. Now there merely remains the trifling task of ensuring that this political game actually delivers peace rather than remaining a mere election ploy.

Russia: Chechen Cease-Fire Monitoring Negotiations Begin

LD2805153696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1507 GMT 28 May 96

[By Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian and Chechen negotiators are discussing the mechanics of monitoring Monday's agreement terminating hostilities, President of the Union of Russia's Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Arkady Volskiy told Itar-Tass.

The Russian side proposed that the special observer commission should resume work on the basis on the experience of last year when the Russians and the Chechens concluded a military deal, Volskiy said.

The Chechens, in turn, insist that international observers, including those from the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe, should be spread all over Chechnya, he said.

However, Volskiy said it was premature to define the outcome of Tuesday's round of talks.

"It is difficult to speak about the results of today's talks between the Russian leadership and (Chechen rebel leader Zelimkhan) Yandarbiyev's delegation, since consultations are underway," Volskiy told Itar-Tass.

The consultations continue. The talks are likely to end on Tuesday, and the Chechen will leave Moscow this evening, he said.

The agreement ending hostilities is of great significance and has more chances of being implemented than last year's military accord, Volskiy said.

Such good chances may be explained by two factors. Firstly, the document was signed by the top officials from both sides, and secondly, federal troops had destroyed the rebel's major bases by the end of May, he noted.

The Russian delegation is headed by Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhaylov. Volskiy was involved in preparation for the Moscow talks.

Russia: Yeltsin Chechnya Visit Hailed as 'Third Strong Move'

MM2905094496 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 29 May 96 p 1

[Report by Pavel Anokhin: "Boris Yeltsin's Third Strong Move in Chechen Policy Has Provided Convincing Evidence That Russia Is United and Indivisible"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The peace plan for the settlement of the Chechen conflict, announced 31 March, was Boris Yeltsin's first strong move. The second, equally effective move was the talks held on the Russian Federation president's initiative with separatist leaders, which ended in the signing of a cease-fire agreement. And now the long-awaited but sudden third strong move: Yesterday Boris Yeltsin came to Chechnya — came, bringing peace.

On arriving in Chechnya, the president visited the 205th Motorized Rifle Brigade where he delivered a speech to the troops, met with inhabitants of Groznyy, and visited the village of Pravoberezhnoye. At Mozdok Airport in North Ossetia the Russian head of state was greeted by Army Generals Pavel Grachev and Anatoliy Kulikov, ministers of defense and internal affairs respectively,

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and Colonel General Anatoliy Kvashnin, commander of the North Caucasus Military District.

The announcement of Boris Yeltsin's visit to Chechnya came as a complete surprise to many people although the Russian president had repeatedly stated his intention of traveling to the warring region before the end of May. And, as we can see, he has kept his word. Thus Boris Yeltsin has once again clearly demonstrated that he is still an extremely dynamic and clever politician, given to well thought-out impromptu actions [as published] and strategems planned many moves in advance. In today's Russia that is a very valuable and essential quality for the country's leader. Explaining the purpose of his visit to Groznyy, Boris Yeltsin said: "It is necessary to demonstrate that the Chechen Republic is part of the Russian Federation and nowhere else."

We contacted the 205th Motorized Rifle Brigade command and asked them to discuss Boris Yeltsin's visit to the troop unit. Your ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI correspondent was told by Colonel Anatoliy Sobolev, the brigade's deputy commander in charge of arms, that the Russian president's helicopter landed on the brigade's parade ground. [passage omitted]

"Conversations with my colleagues showed that most officers and enlisted men in our brigade intend to vote for Boris Yeltsin in the upcoming elections," Anatoliy Sobolev said. "I think that these intentions have now become even stronger." It is noteworthy that the Russian president was welcomed to the troop unit with slogans dating back to the time of General Yermolov [Russian military commander 1777-1861, headed civilian and military authorities in caucasus in early 19th century]: "We have always served in the Caucasus and we will continue to serve there!" "We have an order, we have an oath, we have Russia!" In a word, we must not retreat further!

Meanwhile talks continued in Moscow between the federal authorities and the delegation of Chechen separatists. Moscow was represented there by Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, minister for nationalities affairs and federal relations, Colonel General Anatoliy Shkirko, commander of the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs Internal Troops, and Vladimir Zorin, leader of the Duma Committee for Nationalities Affairs. The concrete conditions and mechanisms for the implementation of the accords reached in the Kremlin were discussed during the talks. [passage omitted]

By the time this issue of the newspaper was signed to press it also became known that Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev's delegation had refused to hold the news conference in Moscow on the results of its talks there, which they had intended to convene during the afternoon. They intend to hold this conference on their return to the Chechen Republic. They attributed their reluctance to meet with journalists in Moscow to the fact that Yandarbiyev's delegation was not given prior warning of Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin's trip to Chechnya.

As Russian Presidential Press Secretary Sergey Medvedev stressed "in his turn, "not all the questions pertaining to the settlement of the crisis in Chechnya have been removed by the signing of this accord and in that connection members of Yandarbiyev's delegation will stay in Moscow to continue the talks with commissions."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin returned to Moscow yesterday.

Russia: Yandarbiyev Seen Ready To Accept 'Tatarstan Option'

MK2905120696 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 29 May 96 p 2

["S.Sh."-signed report: "Tataro-Ingushetia, or an Offshore on the Terek. Will Yandarbiyev Follow in Shaymiyev's Footsteps"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Fantastic predictions regarding Yeltsin's meeting with Yandarbiyev — which, judging by its results, have been fully borne out — makes one pay closer attention to other hints by ranking persons from the presidential entourage, which even yesterday could only be ascribed to their sick imaginations.

It is said that the separatists have nearly agreed to the "Tatarstan option." Can the relationship between the restive republic on the Volga and the Kremlin really be an example for the Chechen leadership to follow? Let us see. The federation treaty between Kazan and Moscow, the agreement on delimiting terms of reference, and a dozen separate agreements on these "terms" gave Shaymiyev huge tax and financial breaks, but only the most negligible trappings of "independence" per se.

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan does not run counter to the Russian Constitution. All laws of the Russian Federation are fully enforced there.

2. The National Bank reports to the Central Bank and operates according to its instructions. Revenues from local enterprises are transmitted to the republic's budget, which is drawn up in Kazan. Subsidies come from the Russian treasury. No currency of its own.

3. The "citizenship of Tatarstan" is not marked even by a stamp in the passport. Local youths are drafted to serve in the federal armed forces.

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We can recall the huge infusions that went into the republic after the disastrous fire at the KamAZ truck plant. Tatarstan's international image has manifested itself in the hostage saga that involved the Tatar pilots held in Qandahar. When everything is okay and the Talibs give yet more promises, President Shaymiyev's foreign policy adviser lurks on the screen now and again. But as soon as something goes wrong, it is "the Russian authorities that do not work hard enough."

The Caucasian separatists' traditional response to federal overtures has long been known. "This is not our option," said Yandarbiyev two years back. Then, as late as January 1996: "We have already seized the levers of economic stabilization.... No compromises until troops are fully withdrawn." And in late April: No talks until they acknowledge who killed Dudayev.

But then, all of a sudden, a U-turn occurs — literally within a couple of days. Zelimkhan announces that he has "a detailed plan" for the settlement of the crisis. Furthermore, he is dead set on going to the Russian capital. He, the intransigent of the intransigent — of all people — exchanges jokes at the table with Boris Nikolayevich.

What has happened? Observers do not rule out the most prosaic explanation. Yandarbiyev did not have to invent anything new. The simple reason is that as the top person of Ichkeria he got access to "Dzhokhar's archive"; that is, the papers, financial obligations, and all the business to which the general attended in person. The miraculous peace project could be the same option Dudayev kept in his desk in the hope of unveiling it at an opportune moment. The one he meant when he suggested that all problems could be resolved within 30 minutes during his one-on-one meeting with Yeltsin: a plan for legalizing prewar Chechnya and for siphoning off money according to a similar Ingush scenario, a free economic zone or any other acceptable label. And all that, with corresponding concessions. Yandarbiyev said even before the start of the talks: "We have offered Russia a pattern for the talks such that they could stop the war and help a great power save face." [passage omitted]

Economic Issues

Russia: Share Prices Rise in Wake of Chechen Accord

LD2805130496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1043 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 28 (FIA-INTERFAX) — Yesterday's agreement between the Russian authorities and Chechen separatist leaders on a cease-fire in Chechnya has forced privatized businesses' shares up.

The investment company Trinfiko reported that between 11 a.m. and noon today its shares grew 7-9 percent in price on Monday's figures. Good news on Chechnya is said to be behind more foreign and domestic investment, and greater interest in Russian stock, especially among Western investors.

This outburst was preceded by Monday's 10 percent rise in share prices, fueled by expectations of the successful completion of the talks between the Chechen separatist leaders and Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The index of Russia's Trading System, accounting for about 15 percent of the shares traded on the off-exchange market, exceeded the starting level of 100 points by 44.76 points on Monday, while Interfax's summarized index hit a record high of 150.66 points.

The market is so unpredictable that any political or economic news may cause jitters.

Meanwhile, experts forecast a progressive rise in share prices in the last three weeks before the June 16 elections, provided they will be spared of political upheavals, which might force foreigners to start mass selling of the Russian shares they have bought. According to some sources, foreign investors would be prepared to spend $2-2.5 billion on Russian shares, if Yeltsin is re-elected for a second term.

Russia: New Capital: Deposits Ratio Rules for Banks

MM2905103896 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 May 96 p 10

[Article by Aleksey Savin: "How Much Depositors' Money Can a Bank Collect"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A mandatory normative for all banks — "the maximum level of monetary deposits attracted from the population" — has been in force since 1 April 1996. Citizens' monetary deposits (categorized by the instruction as current accounts and term deposits in rubles, foreign currency accounts, funds deposited for credit and debit card settlements, savings certificates and bonds for private individuals, and so forth) cannot exceed a bank's own funds (capital).

Only a couple of months ago the only thing which might have curbed a bank's appetites was the sensible consideration that there is no way that such resources can be classed as cheap — the money has to be given back with considerable interest. But if repaying money to the population was not part of a bank's agenda, there was nothing to limit the flow of funds from

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gullible citizens. The "Gorny Altay" bank, for example, managed to collect from individuals a sum 30 times greater than its own capital — and that is not the record, believe me.

It was as if the private investor did not exist as far as law and statutory acts regulating banks' activity were concerned. Only a year ago, after all the bank scandals, the Law "On the Central Bank" referred to the private depositor and decreed that "the maximum level of money deposits attracted from citizens is defined as the maximum correlation between the total sum of citizens' money deposits and banks' own asserts (capital)" (Article 68).

A year ago this "maximum ratio" remained no more than a fond desire of the Bank of Russia, until the new wording of Central Bank Instruction No. 1 "On the Procedure for Regulating the Activity of Credit Organizations" set a mandatory normative.

You often hear that the point of this rule is to ensure that private depositors' money is guaranteed by the bank's own assets. This assertion is based on naive notions of a bank's capital as being a kind of a chest containing some untouched money. In fact the new normative's task is to curb banks' appetites in attracting individuals' resources. The richer a bank is, (and this is determined by its capital), the more money it can collect from the population.

The strict level of the new normative (100 percent) is prescribed only for newly created credit institutions. But what is to be done about those banks which have already managed to accumulate private deposits worth 200 or even 300 percent of their own capital? First, for the first quarter of 1996 they do not have the right to increase the deposits:capital ratio in comparison with the situation as of 1 April 1996. Second, banks where the ratio of people's assets to the bank's capital exceeds 100 percent will be set quarterly levels for this indicator so the normative is gradually reduced (in equal parts) to 100 percent by 1 January 1999. For example, if by 1 April 1996 a bank has attracted twice as many funds as the size of its own capital, by 1 July 1996 the bank will either have to have increased its capital by 9 percent or reduced its debt to depositors. And so on each quarter until, by 1 January 1999, the size of the capital is equal to the sum of people's deposits.

Since most banks' prospects for building up their own assets are extremely uncertain at this time, banks which have accumulated "too much" will have to limit the receipt of deposits from citizens. The simplest way to do this is to reduce the interest paid on deposits. There is only one bank which should not be affected by all these unpleasantness. Instruction No. 1 does not extend to the RF Sberbank [Russian Federation Savings Bank] "pending special instructions." Heaven knows what these special instructions will be when the sum of people's deposits with Sberbank are 10 times greater that its own assets.

The attached table shows the major Russian banks where citizens' deposits represent a considerable proportion of the capital or exceed it. We have chosen banks were the level of people's deposits exceeds 50 billion rubles. Virtually all these banks are in the top 100 Russian banks in terms of both capital and attracted funds.

The number in the table signifies the percentage ratio of citizens' ruble deposits to the bank's capital. In reality the size of funds attracted from the population is greater than the figures which we used for our assessments. For most of the banks in question citizens' funds in foreign currency accounts constitute between 10 and 60 percent of the size of their ruble deposits.

Those at the top of the list are mainly former specialized banks which ordinary citizens with their modest savings feel particularly attracted to by virtue of their "state" origins. It appears that these banks will now have to bring their capital into line with depositors' level of confidence.

Bank	City	Deposits: Capital (as a percentage)
RF Sberbank	Moscow	838
Agroprombank	Moscow	498
"Voronezh"	Voronezh	318
Metkombank	Cherepovets	300
Rospromstroybank	Rostov-na-Donu	290
Promstroybank	Arkhangelsk	214
"Yenisey"	Krasnoyarsk	214
Kubanbank	Krasnodar	198
RF Promstroybank	Moscow	169
Tomskpromstroy-bank	Tomsk	163
Samaraagrobank	Samara	159
Kuzbassprombank	Kemerovo	149
Unikombank	Moscow	145
Uralpromstroybank	Yekaterinburg	141
Vozrozhdeniye	Moscow	126

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Bank	City	Deposits: Capital (as a percentage)
Vostsibkombank	Irkutsk	120
Kapital	Nizhnevartovsk	116
Inkombank	Moscow	'09
Kuzbassotsbank	Kemerovo	106
Zapsibkombank	Tyumen	106
Petrovskiy	St. Petersburg	99
Tveruniversalbank	Tver	96
Chelyabinvestbank	Chelyabinsk	92
Dalrybbank	Vladivostok	91
MAPO-Bank	Moscow	91
Bashprombank	Ufa	87
Omspromstroybank	Omsk	87
Promradtekhbank	Moscow	86
Mostbank	Moscow	84
Sotsinvestbank	Ufa	78
Sibtorgbank	Novosibirsk	72
Uraltransbank	Yekaterinburg	71
Chelindbank	Chelyabinsk	69
Priovneshtorgbank	Ryazan	68
Mosbiznesbank	Moscow	62
Gazprombank	Moscow	61
Promstroybank	St. Petersburg	58
Promstroybank	Nizhniy Novgorod	50

Russia: Defense Industry Production Slumps, Albeit at Slower Pace

MK2805132396 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Crisis in the Military-Industrial Complex Worsens"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A deep crisis in the Russian military-industrial complex continues to worsen, albeit at a slower pace, Vitaliy Vitebskiy, deputy chief of the State Defense Industry Committee's economic department, said, commenting on the results of the defense enterprises' performance in April of this year. In his words, the overall production at Russian defense enterprises in April 1996 continued its downward slide and reached 82.7 percent compared to April 1995. The most drastic production slump within this month was recorded in the following three sectors of the military-industrial complex: communications equipment, 66.3 percent compared to April 1995; electronics, 75.3 percent; and weapons manufacturing, 76.6 percent. The output of civilian products by enterprises subordinate to the Defense Industry Ministry's main administrations was only 77.4 percent compared to the same period last year. Military production also shrank to 93.4 percent of the April 1995 level.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Marchuk Says Draft Treaty With Russia Finalized

LD2405124896 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1045 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belbek Airport — A broad range of issues were discussed "as profoundly as they have never before been discussed" at the meeting with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on 23 May, Ukraine's Prime Minister Yevheniy Marchuk has told journalists. He said "all the i's have been dotted and the t's crossed as regards the general political treaty between Ukraine and Russia." The prime minister said the sides discussed a trade and economic agreement between the two countries for 1996, which has already been drafted and prepared for signing. Marchuk said cooperation in the field of space exploration was considered at the talks with Chernomyrdin. He said there were "many problems" in that field. He also said that the sides approached the final solution to the problem of Ukraine's embassy premises in Russia and Russia's embassy premises in Ukraine.

The sides also discussed mutual use of inland waterways, the functioning of transport systems, in particular gas and oil transport, and cooperation in the field of transporting Russian electricity across the Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine: Foreign Ministry Welcomes New Russian Ambassador

LD2805174496 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1230 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs trusts that the new Russian ambassador's experience and knowledge will have a positive effect on the settlement of bilateral problems, Deputy Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko told a news conference on 28 May.

He said Ukraine hoped that Ambassador Yuriy Dubinin would enter office on this premise and that his work would be conducive to the development of normal relations between Ukraine and Russia, based on the principles of equality and respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Ukraine: Ukraine Hopes New Russian Envoy Will Strengthen Relations

LD2805190996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1555 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, May 28 (Interfax - Ukraine) — It is hoped in Ukraine that the newly-appointed Ambassador of the Russian Federation Yuriy Dubinin will use all of his experience to strengthen bilateral relations on the basis of the Helsinki principles.

A statement to this effect was made in Kiev today by Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko, who was commenting to newsmen on the nomination of Dubinin as Russia's Ambassador to Ukraine.

The Deputy Minister reminded that Dubinin is a highly skillful diplomat, who has been engaged in these activities since 1955.

K. Hryshchenko stressed that the agrement is given by the country of appointment in most cases. A refusal to give the agrement is "an exclusive case", he underlined, and is evidence either of serious problems in bilateral relations, or of a categorical disagreement of the recipient-country with a specific person.

Dubinin was appointed to the office of Russian Ambassador to Ukraine on May 24 this year by a decree of the President of the Russian Federation. His predecessor Leonid Smolyakov has been relieved of his duties in connection with a new appointment.

Over the years of 1994-1995, Dubinin was taking an active part in the Ukrainian-Russian talks on bilateral relations, in particular, as ambassador at large — in the Black Sea Fleet negotiations.

Ukraine: Delegation Attends Conference on Transborder Problems

WS2805134596 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1312 GMT 28 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hungarian town of Siofok hosted the 4th International Conference on transborder problems which was attended by Col. Gen. Viktor Bannyk, chairman of the State Committee for national border protection, the Committee's press center reported. The conference discussed mechanisms for statistical data acquisition and processing, which involve illegal migration and smuggling. The conference's attendants resolved to join efforts to stem illegal migration and smuggling flows through settling up an integrated information system. The conference was attended by law enforcement and border-guard delegations from Ukraine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Belarus, Croatia, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Russia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

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Ukraine: Deputy Foreign Minister Views Black Sea Fleet Talks

LD2805181996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1327 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 28 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Ukraine believes that attempts to tie the problem of the Black Sea Fleet to President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Kiev and the signing of a wide-ranging political agreement complicates bilateral negotiations, Deputy Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko told a Tuesday [28 May] briefing.

As for the issue of basing, he said, it is possible to base two fleets in Sevastopol.

It is possible now, he said, and will be even easier after the Black Sea Fleet is reduced. "The placement of two fleets there is economically beneficial, from the point of view of normal functioning," he said.

Ukraine's position on the division of the Black Sea Fleet remains unchanged on the fleet's status in Ukraine, the location of base positions, and the leasing conditions, which were handed over to the Russian side for examination.

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's recent visit produced an agreement on the transfer of Ukraine's strategic nuclear arsenal to Russia, Hryshchenko said.

It is becoming clear, a foreign ministry press release states, "that the Ukrainian-Russian problem is becoming increasingly significant in the final phase of the president's (Yeltsin's) pre-election campaign."

Ukraine: Presidential Administration Head Meets Cuban Officials

WS2805134496 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1312 GMT 28 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As reported by the Ukrainian foreign ministry press center, Dmytro Tabachnyk, presidential administration head, and members of his official delegation Volodymyr Radchenko, chairman of the Ukrainian Security Service, Ihor Podolyev, first deputy minister for foreign economic relations and trade, Andriy Serdyuk, first deputy health minister, met in Havana with Cuban foreign minister R. Robaina Gozalez and Cuban National Council secretary J. Miyar Barruecos. The meeting was attended by Ukrainian Ambassador to Cuba Oleksandr Taranenko.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Parliamentary Factions Comment on Marchuk Dismissal

WS2905074496 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0617 GMT 29 May 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev — Speaking to INFOBANK on the decision to replace Ukraine's prime minister Member of Parliament Yuriy Orobets (of the parliamentary Reforms group) said that the main reason behind the change in leadership was the fight for power among various political and financial cliques of which for now that from Dnepropetrovsk clique has come out on top. In his opinion Mr. Marchuk's fate would have befallen any prime minister who did not seek the support of the majority in Parliament. Mr. Orobets believes that the main problem which Mr. Marchuk's government failed to resolve was that it was unable to lower taxes so that businesses would be able to operate normally. He also believes that frequent replacements of the prime minister do not have a very positive effect on Ukraine's international image.

One leader of the parliamentary Derzhavnist (Statehood) group, Levko Lukyanenko, claims that Petro Lazarenko, who replaced Mr. Marchuk, was predestined to take over the post of prime minister from the time that he was first appointed to work in the government. Mr. Lukyanenko is, however, convinced that Mr. Marchuk, as person who is intelligent and has strong personal views with regard to Ukrainian problems, will not leave the political arena. He believes that in the future he will run for president and that this dismissal will even help him in future election campaigns. Mr. Lukyanenko said he assumes that it was precisely with the future presidential elections in mind that Mr. Marchuk, while he headed the Cabinet, chose not to take any drastic steps in order to have the opportunity to criticize President Kuchma's economic policies during the next presidential election. Mr. Lukyanenko added that if the new prime minister dares to take decisive steps with regard to privatization and decreasing the pressure of taxation Ukraine will only benefit from such measures.

The Communists reacted negatively to Mr. Marchuk's dismissal since in his last appearances in the mass media he critically evaluated the process of privatization in Ukraine and the overall economic situation in the country. This was the opinion expressed by Valentyna Semeniuk, a member of the parliamentary communist faction, in an interview with INFOBANK. According to Ms. Semeniuk, Mr. Marchuk understood that it was necessary to support not the private sector, but rather to

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begin regulating the economy overall and to introduce state regulation of the economy. In characterizing the ex-prime minister Ms. Semeniuk pointed out that this intellectual person will still be heard from in Ukrainian political circles.

The former president of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, believes that since the socioeconomic situation in Ukraine is getting worse Mr. Kuchma was entirely justified in replacing the prime minister. Mr. Kravchuk describes new leader Petro Lazarenko as a talented practical worker who did well in his administrative work in Dnepropetrovsk and was able to successfully resolve many of the region's problems.

Ukraine: New Prime Minister Issues Statement on Appointment

LD2805172496 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1625 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received] — As is known, Pavlo Ivanovych Lazarenko was appointed Ukraine's prime minister under the Ukrainian president's edict of 28 May 1996. In connection with this, the press service of the Cabinet of Ministers has circulated his statement. The statement says: "I regard my appointment to the post of head of government as the manifestation of the high trust Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma puts in me.

"My stand of principle is that of firm support for the policy of socioeconomic reforms and structural changes in the economy, which is being pursued by Kuchma. This is the only justified way to overcome the crisis in Ukraine and turn it into a modern, civilized state. Therefore, I consider it to be a matter of honor to carry out the economic policy line of the Ukrainian president.

"The priority task now is to accelerate structural transformations, particularly in the basic industries, to step up privatization processes, attract foreign investments, overcome the payments crisis, and regulate the payment of wages and pensions.

"The large-scale socioeconomic transformations that have been launched should be completed in a logical manner. To speed up the solution to the problems that have accumulated, it is also necessary to reorganize the activities of the Cabinet of Ministers.

"The implementation of the reforms requires consolidation of their legislative basis. Therefore, it is utterly important for the Supreme Council of Ukraine to adopt a package of economic draft laws within the shortest possible period of time.

"I am convinced that, despite the economic situation in the country, the constitutional process should end up in the adoption of the fundamental law. This will give a boost to the activities of political forces of the entire society and constructive cooperation of all branches of power for the sake of achieving the main goal — to improve essentially the living standards of the people."

This statement was circulated by the press service of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

Ukraine: Supreme Council Deputies Demand Moroz's Resignation

LD2805181596 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1715 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — At the Supreme Council evening session, Serhiy Sobolyev, the leader of the "Reform" parliamentary grouping, read out a statement signed by 170 deputies, demanding that Oleksandr Moroz should be recalled from the post of Supreme Council chairman.

According to Sobolyev, Moroz is "chairing the parliament in an unsatisfactory manner," "violates the rules of procedure regularly" and "is incapable of uniting deputies." Sobolyev said Moroz shows political and ideological bias and provokes confrontation between the parliament and the executive authorities.

The leader of the "Reforms" grouping proposed that at the next plenary sitting the credentials committee put to the vote a relevant resolution submitted by the group of deputies.

Commenting on this statement, Moroz stressed that he was not against its consideration but he believed that some deputies passed a vote of no confidence in him because he was "strictly abiding by the rules of procedure, which is not to the liking of many deputies." Moroz also said it was inadmissible to put a resolution of such kind to the vote "in oral form," without a proper document.

Ukraine: Communists Present Alternative Constitution to Parliament

LD2805182896 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1230 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The left-wing version of the Ukrainian draft constitution agrees 75 percent with the one proposed by the parliament's ad-hoc commission, Serhiy Hmyrya of the Communist faction told parliament on 28 May.

He said communists were ready to look for a compromise with their colleagues on all the disputed points of the draft. Hmyrya said the left agreed to preserve presidency for a certain period and maintain the official,

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rather than state, status of the Russian language alongside the state language, Ukrainian.

Hmyrya criticized the ad-hoc commission for failing to take account of the left-wing factions' comments. The main differences between the two versions lie in the approach to glasnost and social guarantees, he said. The deputy declared that the communist draft offered wider opportunities for popular rule, particularly through referendums. He pointed out that the ad-hoc commission had failed to restrict presidential powers.

The Communist spokesman stressed that the left proposed new elections to all bodies of power to be held nine months after the adoption of the Constitution.

The parliament resumed the debate on the draft proposed by the ad-hoc commission at 1600. It is expected that deputies will vote for the proposal of Socialist faction members Volodymyr Marchenko and Natalya Vitrenko to reject the draft.

Ukraine: Parliament's Left Wing Sabotages Constitution Debate

LD2905104696 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0840 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev — The Supreme Council's morning session was disrupted on 29 May, with the Communist, Socialist and Peasant Party factions refusing to register for the continuation of the parliament's debate on the Ukrainian constitution. The factions are objecting to the draft proposed by the parliament's ad-hoc commission.

According to Parliament Chairman Oleksandr Moroz, the left factions insist that decisions on the draft's individual clauses in the second reading be approved by a simple majority, instead of two-third majority as required by the rules of procedure, and that the final decision on the draft as a whole be taken by a constitutional majority. The left are proposing a rider to the rules of procedure to allow this change.

Vadym Hetman, a member of the Independent group of deputies, said the Independent and the Interregional groups backed the proposal which they believed would make it easier to register a quorum in the chamber.

Leader of the Ukrainian People's Movement Vyacheslav Chornovil vigorously rejected the proposal, saying that this would mean a change in the rules of procedure which require a two-third majority to pass the draft. This view was supported by Serhiy Holovatyy on behalf of the Reforms faction, Pavlo Movchan on behalf of the Statehood faction and Petro Sheyko on behalf of the Centre group.

Ukraine: Poll Shows Growing Support for Ukraine's Independence

LD2805155096 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a third survey since 1994, the Ukrainian Academy of Political Sciences Center for Political Psychology polled over 2,000 Ukrainian citizens on their attitude to Ukraine's independence. The respondents, representing a cross-section of the population according to age, sex, ethnic origin, occupation, and place of residence were asked to agree or disagree with the statement: Despite the difficulties on the road to statehood, I believe Ukraine should be independent.

The proportion of those consciously supporting independence was 60 percent, with support being weaker in southeastern regions, particularly Donbass and Crimea. The proportion of those in favor of restoring the Soviet Union dropped to 38 percent, while 41 percent rejected the idea; 21 percent were undecided.

Compared with the previous year, the number of those against the union was virtually unchanged, while some of its supporters switched over to the undecided. The present ambivalence of public opinion provides ample room for its manipulation, the center concluded.

While we observed a moderate prevalence of pro-Russian attitudes in 1994 and a balance between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian attitudes in 1995, in 1996 the weight of public opinion shifted toward a moderate prevalence of patriotic sentiments, the survey said.

Ukraine: Nuclear Plant Denies Explosion Rumors

AU2805125096 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 21 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Rumors About the Discharge of Radioactive Substances Have Been Categorically Denied"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The information department of the "Southern Ukrainian Atomic Electric Power Plant" [AES] production association has categorically denied rumors about an "explosion at the AES and discharge of radioactive substances."** Such rumors had spread in the oblast and even outside it, in particular in Kirovohrad. The radiation background on the territory of the plant and in the vicinity is at the level of natural radiation.

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Economic Issues

Ukraine: Yushchenko on Payments Crisis

964F2242A Kiev GOLOS UKRAINY in Russian 15 May 96 p 3

[Article by Viktor Yushchenko, chairman of the board of the National Bank of Ukraine: "Why Is the 'Crisis of Settlements' Seething?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The dialectic of changes in the economy in the first quarter of 1996 reflected a definite reinforcement of normalizing processes together with continuation of the unsatisfactory financial condition of many Ukrainian enterprises. This contradiction reflects the existence, and perhaps the intensification, of a deep-seated and wide-ranging institutional crisis in the economy.

In its most concentrated form the course of events is manifested on one hand in the substantial slowdown of the rates of inflation, in stabilization, and surprising as it may seem, in a definite increase in the exchange rate of the karbovanets. This positive process is seen best of all in specific examples, particularly in the example of the slowdown in the rise of free prices for a number of important food products. Let us look at some recent data from the Ministry of Statistics which have not been forgotten yet (Table 1):

Average Prices in City Markets

	14 Apr 94	14 Apr 95	14 Apr 96	14 Apr 95 as percentage of 14 Apr 94	14 Apr 96 as percentage of 14 Apr 95
Kilogram of beef	37,987	196,000	370,000	516.0	188.8
Liter of milk	5,590	30,000	51,000	536.7	170.0
Ten eggs	14,605	77,000	163,000	527.2	211.7
Kilogram of potatoes	2,428	30,000	75,000	1,235.6	250.0

As we see, the speed at which prices rose over the period from 14 April 1995 to 14 April 1996, compared with the preceding period, decreased very substantially: beef by a factor of 4.7, milk by a factor of 6.2, eggs by a factor of 3.8, and potatoes by a factor of 7.6.

On the other hand, the accounts payable and accounts receivable of enterprises, in nominal prices, are rising at even more substantial rates, prompting individual circles of businessmen to wage another offensive against the government and the National Bank. For this reason I want to assure readers clearly and firmly: The National Bank of Ukraine evaluates the financial condition of enterprises as dangerously inadequate and is not trying to tell the public that everything will be settled somehow. Incidentally, we are closely following the course of similar processes in Russia and we are forced to admit that in overcoming "the payments crisis," the state of affairs here is significantly worse. We are really "unique" here!...

These April campaigns for financial and credit benefits could have been shifted to a normal legislative basis and they could have been made an efficiently operating mechanism in the socially oriented market economy we are creating. But this could have been done if participants in the campaigns did not have the objective of saving the enterprises that are operating worst of all.

So that we do not make unsubstantiated statements, let us analyze some important total indicators. First of all, the people's welfare and accordingly, the condition of the consumer market.

The public's monetary expenditures and savings in the first quarter of this year, compared with the same period in 1995, increased at rates substantially higher than the increase in consumer prices. As a result, the public's real monetary expenditures and savings in January 1996 were 111.5 percent of the amount in January 1995; they were 122.2 percent in February and 113.4 percent in March. In a dollar equivalent, the expansion of consumption increased at an even more rapid rate: 208.4 percent in January, 206.6 percent in February, and 192.0 percent in March.

The consumer market expanded in roughly the same proportions, which our domestic commodity producers obviously could not take advantage of properly, and this is reflected in the continuous buildup of enterprises' mutual indebtedness. They have not increased their finan-

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cial strength. This thesis probably will lead to heated criticism of this type: "What have we been saying?" But let us not be hasty. According to the January figures (taking the rise in consumer prices into account), enterprises' money supply was 72.7 percent of the same period last year. In February and March, this indicator increased somewhat, reaching 75.5 and 79.8 percent, respectively. With respect to the economic substance of enterprises' money supply, it is the monetary component of the working capital of those engaged in economic operations. If it increases nominally, but not in real terms, the mobile component of enterprises' working capital—monetary assets—changes in the same way.

Why has this happened? Where did the earnings from the sale of output disappear to? According to our estimates, this was close to 3 quadrillion karbovantsy in the first quarter. Primarily, it was aimed at the increase in wages both nominally and actually (Table 2):

Wages of Workers and Employees

	1995	1996	1995 in Percentage of 1996	1996 Consumer Prices in Percentage of 1995	Actual 1996 Wages, in Percentage of 1995
January	51,678	158,004	305.7	254.2	120.3
February	65,870	192,764	292.6	231.2	126.6
March	81,131	192,379	237.1	213.8	110.9
Total	**198,679**	**543,147**	**273.4**	**230.7**	**118.5**

Nominally, wages of workers and employees in the first quarter had a rate of growth of 273.4 percent. The actual increase was not so significant, though it was appreciable, reaching 118.5 percent. The monetary incomes of the public as a whole showed a similar change.

The public's monetary incomes in the first quarter increased at a rate of 249.8 percent, but at a rate of 108.2 percent in real terms. These changes could be considered positive if we had not forgotten who appeals for state financial preferences. After all, the increase in the public's monetary incomes in the first quarter was a sizable sum—496.345 quadrillion karbovantsy. It was this very amount of money that was channeled from the GDP to increase the public's monetary incomes. In other words, this amount of added value created in the first quarter was aimed at increasing the public's monetary incomes, in addition to replenishing the monetary working capital of enterprises and in addition to building up the money supply in them.

The shortcomings in replenishing working capital are not exhausted just by the fact cited. It should be noted that poor work by enterprises in the consumer market has led to the loss of significant additional sales and quite naturally, the opportunities to replenish working capital and alleviate tension in settlements. Out of the 2,369.635 trillion karbovantsy in monetary income received by the public in 1995, the expenditures to purchase foreign exchange totaled 199.765 trillion karbovantsy, or 8.4 percent. A substantial amount of public incomes—176.383 trillion karbovantsy—went directly toward an excess over expenditures and savings and abandoned the official economy.

Altogether, our consumers "did not find" commodities valued at 376.148 trillion karbovantsy—15.9 percent of the total incomes—in the official economy. Unfortunately, the totals attest to the fact that this negative trend is continuing (Table 3):

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Expenditures to Purchase Foreign Exchange			Monetary Incomes in Excess of Expenditures and Savings		Sum of Money "Lent" to Finance Commodity Producers in the Official Economy [amounts in trillions of karbovantsy]		
	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995	1996	1995, in Percentage of 1996
January	3.887	31.894	3.332	-4.234	7.219	27.660	383.2
February	5.767	37.846	12.063	23.947	17.830	61.793	346.6
March	7.213	41.649	16.793	1.000	24.006	42.649	177.7
Altogether	16.867	111.389	32.188	20.713	49.055	132.102	269.3

In the first quarter another 132.102 quadrillion karbovantsy were added to these losses in 1995 to finance domestic commodity producers.

Under conditions of the rapid increase in the public's nominal monetary incomes and significant losses of karbovantsy in cash for domestic commodity producers because of the imbalance in the consumer market, a continuous increase in enterprises' debts appears to be completely natural. This is also confirmed by the factor that commodities already consumed and work and services already provided account for more than two-thirds of creditor indebtedness. It is not their debt to the budget, for wages, or for bank credits that determines the enterprises' distorted financial condition, but their poor work for the end consumer and among themselves. However, for the sake of objectivity, a definite decrease in tensions with nonpayments and some improvement in the situation should be noted. The fact is that the nominal GDP in the first quarter of 1996, compared with the same period last year, increased substantially faster than creditor indebtedness.

In the first quarter of 1995 the increase in debtors accounted for 82.9 percent of GDP. That is, it may be said that 82.9 percent of the additional value created (which was materialized in the value of commodities delivered, work performed, and services provided) was not realized and was not paid for by consumers. In our estimation, the proportion of this additional value, which was consumed and not paid for, dropped to 57.5 percent in the first quarter of 1996. We believe that these dynamics attest to a slowdown in the rise of enterprises' indebtedness with respect to GDP and a general easing of tension with nonpayments. However, this does not remove the need to increase managers' responsibility for their enterprises' financial condition from the agenda. This is understandable under conditions in which appropriate effective mechanisms to overcome "the crisis of settlements" are being created and launched. The National Bank of Ukraine is now radically updating its proposals in this connection, with work to be completed in June 1996.

Ukraine: IMF Issues Second $100 Million Tranche of Stand-By Loan

LD2405163696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1324 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 24 (Interfax-Ukraine) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) decided to issue a second $100 million tranche of its stand-by loan to Ukraine Friday, IMF representative in Ukraine Alex Sundakov told Interfax-Ukraine Friday.

The IMF board decided to resume the stand-by loan to Ukraine on May 10. In total, the Fund will loan the republic $867 million.

Ukraine has already received the first $100 million tranche of this loan.

Ukraine: Kuchma Says Government To Blame for Payments Crisis

LD2305170396 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0840 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ternopol [no date as received] — President Leonid Kuchma has said that one of the state's priority economic tasks is to combine macroeconomy with the processes taking place at the monetary level. He made this statement at a meeting with chairmen of district state administrations and leaders of industrial and agricultural enterprises in Ternopol region. Kuchma said these processes should be controllable.

Kuchma expressed regret in connection with the absence of a state strategy of rebuilding Ukraine's economy. "We should build a Ukrainian economy rather than exploit a piece of the Soviet economy," he said. At the same time, Kuchma said it was primarily the

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government to blame for the payments crisis that is now the most burning problem in the country. He said "the government has failed to make proper rules of the game."

Kuchma told a news conference that "people have been put in a position where they feel nostalgia for the past. In the east of the country this sentiment is stronger than in the west."

The president said the authorities should do all they can to pay pensions on time. He believes that "the population will not vote in favor of the new constitution" until the government copes with the problem of payments, which resulted in a debt to the budget-funded sphere.

Ukraine: Miners Committee Discuss Coal Industry Reform

WS2905085496 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0617 GMT 29 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As UKRINFORM's Lugansk correspondent reported on May 28, the Lugansk regional miners' committee has initiated a meeting to discuss implementation of the presidential decree "On Reformation of the Ukrainian Coal Industry." The meeting, which took place on May 28, was addressed by Ukraine's Deputy Coal Industry Minister Yaroslav Pidhaynyy, who noted that the presidential decree provides for substantial financial assistance from the government. He stated a number of factors impeding implementation of the decree. It was also noted that the decree will not solve the problem of non-payment of back wages, which had amounted to 32 trillion karbovanets as of April 1.

On May 28, 13 of the region's mines went on strike to demand payment of wages. Other mines have postponed strike actions until May 30, when the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers is due to return to the issue of restructuring the sector.

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Belarus

Belarus: Belarusian, Russian TU's Discuss Integration

WS2705104696 Minsk NARODNAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 May 96 p 2

[Report by Anatol Hatowchyts and Aleh Mikalaychyk: "Trade Unions Strive for the 'Third Floor' of Integration"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **As has already been reported, a two-day working meeting of Belarusian and Russian trade unions, with the participation of representatives of the Federation of Ukrainian Trade Unions, has been held in Homel. It was devoted to cooperation among trade union centers in the conditions of deepening economic integration.**

It is hard to tell who was the first one to divide the current relations among CIS countries into levels or floors. Nevertheless, it seems that this division is firmly settling into our vocabulary. At the meeting in Homel, Vladimir Shcherbakov, chairman of the Universal Confederation of Trade Unions, said literally the following: There are currently three floors of relations within the CIS. The first floor includes 12 countries, the second floor four countries, and the third one two countries — Russia and Belarus which have climbed higher than anyone else after signing the treaty on establishing a community in April. Because the treaty has been ratified by the parliaments, a new legal field has emerged on the "third floor." However, trade unions — the largest representatives of the working people — have not ended up on this floor.

As we can see, trade unions have realized this very quickly, and have begun fighting for their place on the emerald-green lawn located on the third floor, which has not yet been walked upon.

They summoned a meeting, and the Homel land, whose roosters can be heard in three countries at the same time, hospitably welcomed some 100 Russians representing federative, nationwide, and regional associations of trade unions.

The hosts — the Federation of Belarusian Trade Unions [FPB] — had an appropriate representation as well. So that the meeting did not resemble a "Viskuli [the site were the Belovezhskaya Accords were signed] of trade unions on the third floor," they invited Ukrainian colleagues. As a matter of fact, our neighbors themselves, as the saying goes, have their hands full: the Supreme Council is getting ready to pass a constitution and a law on trade unions which, in the opinion of department chief Ihor Chumachenko who represented the Federation of Ukrainian Trade Unions, inadequately reflect the role and place of trade unions in society. Therefore, the federation's highest leadership is busy with domestic Ukrainian problems, and sent Chumachenko and his comrades to the meeting in Homel.

"Our Ukrainian colleagues," FPB Chairman Uladzimir Hancharyk expressed his opinion, "did not participate in the meeting as an equal party, most likely because that country's state policy has different hues that ours and Russia's."

Despite the absence of Ukrainian trade union leaders on the third floor, the event in Homel did not remain in the shadows. Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Boris Yeltsin even sent greetings messages to the participants. The two heads of state are evidently interested in trade union support for their striving for integration. For Yeltsin, the new community is a good trump card in the presidential race against Zyuganov's supporters. For Lukashenka, it is perhaps yet another beautiful line in the biography of an integrator and collector of Slavic peoples.

As became clear, trade unions, in turn, are looking for their own place in the quest for integration. After all, as we believe, Vladimir Shcherbakov, whom we already know, and Mikhail Shmakov, chairman of the Federation of Russian Independent Trade Unions, did not say that the Belarusian-Russian bilateral agreement needs support from below for nothing. The most powerful trade union centers from both states are probably aspiring to this role, because their potential has not yet been used. So far, there are neither Belarusian nor Russian trade unions in the supranational bodies which are being created — the Supreme Council of the Community, the Executive Committee, and the Interparliamentary Assembly.

"Finally," Uladzimir Hancharyk said, "we must react to the treaty on the community in the most careful manner, and fill it with real content."

The question as to why the Belarusian Free Trade Unions did not attend the meeting arose. How could this be explained?

"Frankly speaking, we did not invite them, knowing their negative attitude to the treaty."

"By the way," the FPB leader added, "not all Russian trade unions are attending the meeting."

Of course, everybody sticks to their opinions. Nonetheless, a new legal field has actually emerged in Belarusian-Russian relations recently. Despite certain differences in their socioeconomic situations, Belarus and Russia have many common problems. A significant decline in the main economic indicators is evident. Wages are not paid for months at many enterprises.

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Large-scale unemployment has developed, and this particularly refers to hidden unemployment. The system of labor protection, no matter how poor its condition may be, is disintegrating, and so is the network of cultural, sport, and health care facilities for workers and, particularly, children. Spas, and sometimes even health camps for children, have become inaccessible for workers and their families.

No stimuli for supporting domestic producers have been created. Civilized entrepreneurship is in a bad condition. Creating new workplaces and modernization of outdated ones is not being sufficiently encouraged.

The authorities' pressure on organizations of workers, including trade unions, is systematically increasing.

The new reality also requires coordination and unification of the two countries' legislation concerning labor and granting citizens' equal rights to employment, remuneration for labor, education, pensions, and social insurance. Problems concerning protection of labor have emerged in all their magnitude, as the saying goes, particularly in regions "polluted" after Chernobyl. The executive authorities are by all means trying to settle people there, without providing them with sufficient health care and appropriate labor and living conditions. To put it briefly, economic integration should be accompanied by social measures based on the best standards.

The official trade unions believe that their participation in these urgent issues will contribute to their fair resolution. Nobody else is able to do this better. Therefore, the participation of trade unions in the work of the Supreme Council of the Community, the Interparliamentary Assembly, the Executive Committee, and branch administrative bodies is advisable.

It is interesting that while setting such goals for themselves — which, by the way, were expounded in an appeal to the heads of state, parliaments, and governments adopted by the participants in the meeting — and supporting the principles of the treaty on the community, the Russian trade union leaders advocated another global goal: the "revival of greater Russia." In particular, this was stated by Mikhail Shmakov during the meeting.

The Belarusian trade unions did not voice similar words about the revival of their motherland. They were probably more interested in forms of cooperation and participation in the community's supranational bodies, as well as in close cooperation among trade unions at the level of governments, federation departments, branch organizations, trade union committees, joint commissions, experts adjusting the two countries laws on trade unions and labor, etc. And it seemed that our trade unions will secure mass presence on the "third floor" of Belarusian-Russian agreements, though this may finally prove to be the mass presence of the leaders of official trade unions.

God forbid that the treaty between the two countries becomes yet another declaration similar to other numerous ones which have been created during the existence of the CIS. If this happens — and it cannot be ruled out — the trust of the Russian and Belarusian peoples in the authorities and the idea of integration and revival will be ultimately undermined. This thought became a leitmotif of many speeches by participants in the meeting of Slavic trade unions in Homel.

The Belarusian authorities' actions with regard to the arrest and deportation of a delegation of the Polish "Solidarity" trade union, which was headed by its chairman M. Krzaklewski and which was invited to Belarus by the Belarusian Free Trade Union, evoked a very stormy reaction.

The leaders of the Russian and Belarusian trade unions resolutely protested this.

"National trade union centers and international trade union associations assess the arrest and expulsion from Belarus of the members of a Polish trade union delegation as a gross violation of trade unions' rights and freedoms and provisions of Convention N 87 of the International Organization of Labor on freedom of association and protection of the right to organization, which has been ratified by Belarus. The FPB Presidium insist on investigating this incident, as well as on making the guilty responsible," says an appeal to our country's President Alyaksandr Lukashenka by Uladzimir Hancharyk.

Belarus: Military Official on Cooperation With Russia

WS2805135296 Minsk RESPUBLIKA in Russian 23 May 96 p 6

[Interview with Major General Yuryy Partnoy, Belarus deputy defense minister for issues of military policy, by Yawhen Rostsikaw; place and date not given: "Shoulder to Shoulder"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A joint session of the Boards of the Belarusian and Russian Defense Ministries was held in Moscow in the middle of May. RESPUBLIKA observer Yawhen Rostsikaw has asked Major General Yuryy Partnoy, Belarusian deputy defense minister for issues of military policy, to speak about the decisions made there.

[Partnoy] Joint sessions of the two ministries' boards have become a good tradition. We have managed to

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achieve specific results on many problems. However, there are problems which need a more detailed examination and preparations at least to be in line with the legislative basis and the political resolutions. At the current stage we agreed that all the issues will be coordinated within the framework of the Supreme Council of the Community [of Sovereign Republics] and its Executive Committee.

A number of documents were discussed in the course of the joint session which specify cooperation in the military-political, military, and military-technical areas. We signed a protocol of intent for preparing the concept of a common defense policy. Besides, we made a resolution to draft a new agreement on military cooperation between our countries, similar to the old one signed in 1992, which was envisaged for the initial period of establishing the national Armed Forces, and which has been completely implemented.

[Rostsikaw] What are the directions of the new agreement?

[Partnoy] This is primarily the coordination of efforts in the area of disarmament and exercising control over armaments in the international arena. As for military cooperation, we determined the primary directions and principles of the military development and the use of the two countries' infrastructures. We reached an agreement on holding joint activities in operational training, including the participation in various command-staff exercises. Let me cite the most recent example. Exercises were recently held on the territories of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus within the framework of the common air defense. We intend to continue this kind of cooperation in the military area.

[Rostsikaw] Are there many problems in the military-technical area?

[Partnoy] Yes, there are many problems, indeed. Although ours and Russia's military equipment is practically of the same type and the infrastructure of the military-industrial complex remains the same, for a number of reasons we have suffered certain losses. We have reached a number of agreements on the exchange of military-technical information, on conducting joint scientific research and experimental-construction activities, on exchange and mutual payments for the deliveries of equipment and its repairs. There is also mutual understanding on other issues which are oriented toward enhancing the combat readiness, or as we call it, technical readiness, of our armaments.

[Rostsikaw] As we know, everything in the world becomes obsolete, including military equipment. At the moment, we are not able to acquire new equipment. What solution to this problem do you envision?

[Partnoy] We unquestionably have contemporary military equipment. Indicators of its technical readiness and its operational lifespan are fully satisfactory to ensure its operation for decades or even longer. Although, it obviously needs scheduled maintenance and servicing. We constantly search for possibilities to extend the operational lifespan of our equipment. It is very important that we have managed to preserve specialists who know how to maintain the equipment's combat readiness at a satisfactory level.

[Rostsikaw] As far as I know, the issue of training Belarusian servicemen in Russia was raised at the boards' session.

[Partnoy] Regarding this issue we received full support on the part of the Russian Federation Defense Ministry. In fact, there was an attempt to postpone the deadline for the implementation of this agreement. However, the Russian defense minister clearly determined the task and decided that our officers would attend Russian institutions of military education on the same basis as Russian officers, beginning on 1 September 1996. At the same time, Russian servicemen will be able to study at our Military Academy.

[Rostsikaw] Mr. Partnoy, can you dwell for a while on the agreement on the elimination of conventional arms?

[Partnoy] As we know, following the collapse of the USSR, Belarus, against its will, appeared to be the most militarized republic. We primarily had to make efforts to comply with the provisions of the CFE [Conventional Forces in Europe] Treaty. As for the scrapping of tanks, combat aircraft, and arms systems we have complied fully with the treaty's provisions. At the moment, we are completing the elimination of armored combat vehicles. I believe that our state will not be accused of noncompliance with the treaty's provisions at the final conference which opened in Vienna on 16 May.

[Rostsikaw] Cooperation with Russia in the military area undoubtedly gives our Army various benefits. However, we have not forgotten about the fact that the Russian Army was once drawn into the resolution of a domestic conflict [between president and parliament]. Is this kind of situation possible in our country?

[Partnoy] No, I definitely say: No! Currently, the Belarusian Armed Forces are a powerful state institution. They perform their tasks in full conformity with the Constitution. I do not think that anyone in the political leadership of our state would be able to make the decision to change the status and the principles of using our Armed Forces. Besides, while speaking before

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the Defense Ministry leadership, President Alyaksandr Lukashenka highly assessed our Armed Forces and said that he would never allow a situation in which the Armed Forces would be involved in any political games.

[Rostsikaw] Recently, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev referring to Alyaksandr Lukashenka, said that our Republic will be ready to deploy nuclear weapons on its territory if NATO approaches the Belarusian border. I know the Belarusian Foreign Ministry's stance on this issue. I would also like to find out the Defense Ministry's point of view.

[Partnoy] This question exceeds by far the framework of our ministry's competence. I can give you my personal opinion: At this point, NATO will hardly resort to deploying nuclear weapons in the vicinity of the CIS's boarders. This will undoubtedly evoke bewilderment among the world community. On what principles would the deployment be conducted? In addition, it will contradict the principles of the European security system, given that these kinds of activities will force Russia to undertake adequate countermeasures.

[Rostsikaw] What kind of measures do you particularly have in mind?

[Partnoy] It is not very difficult to foresee these measures. Nobody should doubt that they will be undertaken.

[Rostsikaw] Does it mean that the issue of deploying nuclear weapons on Belarusian territory may one day be on the agenda?

[Partnoy] Our Constitution declares that our country is a nonnuclear state. We have no grounds to change our aspiration for anonnuclear status.

[Rostsikaw] At this point?

[Partnoy] We obtained nuclear safety assurances when we signed the treaty on the withdrawal of strategic offensive weapons from our territory. Besides, the Russian Federation's nuclear potential is big enough to secure our protection even within the framework of the [CIS] Collective Security Treaty. I reiterate: Currently there is no real military threat. However, it may appear sometime. And it is the task of politicians and diplomats to prevent the transformation of a military threat into a military catastrophe.

[Rostsikaw] Mr. Partnoy, let us proceed to much easier but equally important questions.... An edict which was recently signed by the Belarusian president on changing the uniforms of servicemen — is it not an attempt to standardize it with Russian style uniforms?

[Partnoy] This is an attempt to create a national style of uniform to make our servicemen look nice on a daily basis and to make uniforms comfortable in combat conditions.

[Rostsikaw] Did we really need to establish our own Military Academy?

[Partnoy] There were many discussions on this issue at the time of its establishment. At the moment, nobody doubts that this academy is Belarus's national achievement. Currently, we would not be able to talk about statehood if we did not have our own workshop for turning out military personnel.

[Rostsikaw] We know that an army's strength lies in the society's attitude toward it. Are you satisfied with our society's attitude?

[Partnoy] Yes, I am satisfied. Traditionally, in both countries — Russia and Belarus — the populations have always respected people in epaulets. Currently, military service becomes truly service for the nation.

Belarus: Minsk, Kiev Ponder 'Technical' Border Demarcation Problems

MK2805135396 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 May 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Belarus"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Konstantin Grishchenko, Ukrainian deputy foreign minister, arrived in Minsk on a brief working visit yesterday. The visit is part of interministerial consultations between the foreign ministries of Ukraine and Belarus.

Konstantin Grishchenko met with Valeriy Tsepkalo, first deputy foreign minister of Belarus, to discuss questions concerning the development of bilateral relations and, particularly, the problems of border demarcation and delimitation.

According to Vladimir Kabanov, chief of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry's press service, there are no political problems between Ukraine and Belarus regarding the demarcation of their border, but related technical matters "require a lengthy discussion."

As Vladimir Kabanov put it, until recently, Belarus's borders with Ukraine and Lithuania "existed in name only." The problem of demarcating the Belarusian-Lithuanian border was resolved through consultations.

The press service said that as yet it would be too early to comment on the signing of such documents with Ukraine. The most complex part of these documents is the demarcation maps that are currently being drawn by expert groups. They have yet to hold a number of working meetings, which are due to lay the groundwork for the signing of a Ukrainian-Belarusian agreement.

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Belarus: Lukashenka on Personnel Policy, Economy

WS2405143996 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 24 May 96

[Report by Svyatlana Ilyushenka, in Russian]

[FBIS Translated Text] All institutions of a sovereign state have been formed and are normally functioning in Belarus. However, only highly qualified and scrupulous people are able to precisely implement the administration's policies, control the consolidation processes in society, and improve the economic system. Therefore, a national seminar has been organized for the leadership aimed at teaching them the theory and practice of state management, economy, and modern personnel policy. The seminar is being attended by the Belarusian Presidential Administration leadership, officials representing the Cabinet of Ministers, ministries, and departments; employees of executive bodies, courts, and prosecutor's offices. They will learn the methods of deepening Belarus' integration with Russia and other CIS states. The seminar is chaired by Presidential Administration Head Mikhail Myasnikovich. Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka delivered a speech to the audience [on 23 May].

[Begin Lukashenka recording — in Russian] We have a common cause and we have a common goal — the Belarusian people's well-being. The principal thing for us is to reach a common understanding of the priorities of Belarus' domestic and foreign policies, which will help us unite our efforts. Our Republic was always famous for the high qualifications of its leadership. The selection and appointment of personnel was efficient, and a high- quality reserve of leaders was created. The [word indistinct] personnel policy, including well-organized training of high-quality leaders, was one of the principal factors determining our Republic's status as a highly developed region of the Soviet Union. The Belarusian people's living standards were higher than in a number of other Soviet republics.

I think you will agree with my opinion that a complete return to the past is impossible. However, it would be inexcusable not to use the experience which was accumulated in the past and has stood the test of time. Unfortunately, the system of selecting highly qualified personnel was practically ruined in recent years. We have been faced with the task of reinstating — at least partially — what we had in the past. We have decisively abandoned the practice of [?nominating] leaders solely on the basis of their occupying high Communist Party and [word indistinct] posts. I will even say more. When I appoint an official or seek approval for his appointment I always look at his biographical data and I am pleased to see that the person worked in the administrative structures in the past, for this is how we accumulate experience for managing our state at various levels.

Two requirements have been and remain the principal ones in our assessment of personnel: high professional qualifications and, naturally, the employee's moral virtues. Today [word indistinct] I can assure you that the destruction of the personnel policy in Belarus is being gradually replaced by a methodical and persistent personnel policy. A comprehensive national system of working with the leadership is taking shape. We have created the national register of personnel; the presidential hierarchy has been formed and started to function; the Presidential Management Academy has stepped up its activities.

At the same time, we should self-critically acknowledge that we have not done enough. We are trying to very carefully treat the selection and appointment of personnel at higher levels of the administration. Of course, we, too, make mistakes, a lot of mistakes. Nobody is immune to mistakes. However, those mistakes are mostly made for one reason: we do not have enough leaders with appropriate qualifications. So far, we have not managed to establish a genuinely efficient system of forming a reserve of the leadership in either the sphere of state management or the production sector. I will be frank with you: our Republic is in dire need of professionals in the sphere of state administration, including local administration, and in the production sector. If people do not want to engage in politics, they should not enter it. It is the Presidential Administration which is responsible for personnel issues and for politics. It is there that people responsible for the selection of personnel and for politics work. All others should professionally perform their duties, no matter who is in power. There is another thing which is very important to me: if one does not know how to conduct personnel policy, if someone has no understanding of politics to speak of, why sneak into politics? Later these people may be ashamed to look into the eyes of their friends and children.

I would like to say that the times of dilettantes have gone for good. Only highly qualified leaders, new-type managers should exercise power in our sovereign state, those who are able to soberly assess the situation in their work sector and in the Republic in general and to make well-considered decisions on the basis of this assessment. We understand perfectly well that practice and life are the main tests for a leader. Serious difficulties do not scare true leaders; they only give them more energy. Our current reality offers perfect opportunities for leaders to demonstrate their abilities.

On the other hand, we realize that your situation is not easy. Therefore, the Belarusian leadership will continue

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to create favorable conditions for the improvement of your skills both through organizing training courses and through self-education.

Of course, the economy is the principal sector of our personnel's activities. You are aware of the measures being undertaken in the Republic to overcome the economic crisis. These measures were discussed many times by the president, the Cabinet of Ministers, and at national conferences. Based on the results of the first quarter of 1996, we can draw a conclusion about the existence of small, but positive trends. As of March, we have observed an increase in GDP and in the volume of industrial production, including in machine building, as compared to the corresponding period of 1995. The production of consumer goods has approached the level of April 1995. The situation in the agricultural sector has slightly improved. The envisioned inflation rate has been observed. However, the situation in this sphere remains extremely tense.

All our enterprises and organizations are experiencing problems. However, in certain companies and institutions leaders are looking for ways to resolve those problems. Therefore, we should organize a system for learning the experience of the best representatives of our managerial corps and ensure its general application in other enterprises. We should launch full-fledged training of the personnel of ministries, departments, and [words indistinct]

I would like to dwell on certain essential issues which you should take into account in your further work. Within the framework of implementing our programs, we should expedite the resolution of the two-element problem: first, the implementation of priorities in the development of the national economy and the reorganization of enterprises incapable of resuming efficient operation in the immediate future. [Word indistinct] and bankruptcy mechanism should be applied to reorganize them. Unfortunately, we have the Law on Bankruptcy but we do not a mechanism for its application. [end recording]

Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka drew the participants' attention to virtually all the problemic aspects of our life: the improvement of mechanisms for conducting and managing economic activities; the implementation of plans to protect domestic producers; the development of production and investments; the rational use of monetary-credit resources; the improvement of the activities of legal bodies; correlation between wages and labor productivity. He primarily pointed at personal responsibility. No one should take a temporizing stance. Everyone should work conscientiously.

Belarus: President Orders Wages Paid 'Until End of June'

WS2905084296 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0300 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] While undergoing a series of health-improvement procedures according to recommendations from the doctors, yesterday, 28 May, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka obtained current information about the implementation of his demands expressed at a conference of high-level officials of the Republic on 25 May. According to the Presidential Press Service, participants in the five-hour conference considered the issues of economic stabilization, finance and credit policy, budget, and timely payment of wages and pensions for the population. The head of state demanded and firmly ordered the government and the National Bank that, until the end of June, they conform to the schedule of timely payment of wages in all spheres of the national economy, do not reduce the functioning of social programs, and introduce personal responsibility of managers at all levels for nonpayment of taxes by economic entities.

Moldova

Moldova: Parliamentarians Advocate Settlement of Dniester Conflict

AU2805122896 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 2100 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, May 27 (INFOTAG) — Moldovan and Dniester parliament deputies spoke up for speeding up the conflict settlement. Last Saturday [25 May], they held a meeting in Chisinau, and agreed to set up joint working groups to tackle concrete problems. These groups will be working permanently, and joint parliamentary commissions will hold their meetings only periodically.

Both the Chisinau and Tiraspol deputies were unanimous in their wish to solve the problem, but demonstrated different approaches to it.

Parliament Chairman Petru Lucinschi said there was no other way but through a political settlement in the framework of the territorially integral Republic of Moldova. "That is the wish of an absolute majority of people, including from the left bank, with whom I met yesterday", Lucinschi said. In his opinion, at the present time, with mediators' guarantees available, there exist all prerequisites for a reasonable solution of the Dniester dispute.

The parliament chairman of the unrecognized republic, Grigore Maracuta, was less optimistic about the issue.

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He believes, the sides should, first and foremost, be more accurate in fulfilling documents signed earlier. He does not rule out a possibility of solving the problem through founding a Moldovan confederation — in a way acceptable to both sides.

The Tiraspol deputies showed quite a restraint concerning prospects of political settlement, and spoke up only for expanding economic cooperation. They said, the Dniester Parliamentary commission includes 15 deputies from various political forces, and they cannot act independently of their parties' political platforms. An absolute majority of these parties stand up for Dniester's independence of Moldova.

Moldova: Dniester's Maracuta: 'Any Dialogue Better Than Silence'

AU2905112696 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tiraspol, May 28 (INFOTAG) — Dniester Parliament chairman Grigore Maracuta believes, "any dialogue is better than silence." He stated this on Monday in the Dniester Parliament reporting on the results of the first-ever meeting of the Moldovan and Dniester legislature dedicated to the Dniester settlement.

Maracuta has assured the audience that the parliamentary commission will continue negotiations with Chisinau — alongside with expert teams and summit meetings. The commission will be strictly observing earlier accords, and will work for obtaining a state-legal status for the region. He called as unacceptable Chisinau's proposals about other variants of the conflict settlement.

At the same time, the separatist speaker emphasized the necessity to continue the negotiation process for the sake of solving a multitude of other problems being faced by local economic entities and the population. In his opinion, Chisinau realizes the necessity to solve these problems.

Maracuta presumes that after economic and social problems are settled between the sides, it will be possible to conduct more efficiently negotiations on the conflict political settlement.

Moldova: Sangheli Visits Balti, Discusses Election Campaign

AU2705204796 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2045 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Balti, 24/05/1996 (BASA-press) — Premier Sangheli Friday concluded his two-day visit in Balti.

Asked by BASA whether his visit could be viewed as the start of his campaigning for the presidential office, Sangheli said "if the Government will get involved in political games, we'll lose the economy, and it'll make no difference then who the president is. That is why, we do our best, and I think we'll even call Monday the cabinet members in a meeting to clearly show we have no right to bury the economy just for the reason that we have to get involved in the electoral campaign. I assure you that we'll be active participants in the electoral campaign, but only in the autumn, when we'll see the crops gathered in storehouses, and industry revived."

Sangheli visited the Alecu Russo University and several enterprises to see the progress of restructuring on field and preparations for the storing of this year's crops. Among the visited enterprises was the Raut plant of the former Soviet military-industrial complex.

The Premier told reporters that he met with the Balti City Council to discuss problems related to water, electricity and heat supply in the city.

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Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyz President, Russia's Stroyev Discuss CIS Integration

LD2705115696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1041 GMT 27 May 96

[By Ludmila Yermakova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, May 27 (Itar-Tass) — "The leadership of Kyrgyzstan with satisfaction notes deepening integration ties and processes within Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)", president of Kyrgyzstan Askar Akayev said today during talks with Yegor Stroyev, chairman of the Russian Federation Council and Russia's Interparliamentary Assembly Council (IAC), held in the framework of the visit of the Federation Council's delegation to the republic today.

Askar Akayev noted "it is impossible alone to resolve problems, CIS-member states face", and emphasized that his republic "will consistently stand for strengthening of the concord of four states in the future as well". "The union of four has already began to work", he noted with satisfaction.

The president described the current period as a special one in Kyrgyz-Russian relations, which can be characterized as relations of strengthening friendship and cooperation. Speaking of economic interaction, he noted that "with Russia's help Kyrgyzstan has got down to production of absolutely new output, including research and development intensive one". The head of the republic drew attention towards the fact that the Russian language was used as a fully official language without any exceptions in Kirghizia, and appropriate amendments would be included in the Constitution. Yegor Stroyev expressed his satisfaction with the republican leadership's "respectful attitude towards the Russian-speaking population".

The arrival of the Russian Federation Council's delegation and delegations from other IAC-member states was characterized by Yegor Stroyev as "the beginning of legislative unity of four states, having signed a treaty on deepening of the integration". According to his words, their arrival is also an illustration of "support and recognition of the course taken by the Kyrgyz leadership on strengthening ties within the CIS".

The two sides noted growing mutual understanding between the states, which, to their opinion, is being contributed by "an exclusively important role, played by model laws, developing within the IAC". The current task of lawmakers is to create a legal base, which could seal agreements exclusively within the CIS framework and switch on the mechanism of their use, Yegor Stroyev noted. He emphasized that the concord of the four nations "may and is already becoming a nucleus for the future unification, which may take place instead of the former Soviet Union".

Kyrgyzstan: Package of Agreements Signed With Yakut Republic

LD2805165196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1133 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, May 28 (Interfax) — Kyrgyz Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov and President Mikhail Nikolayev of Yakutia (a republic within the Russian Federation) signed a package of intergovernmental documents in Bishkek on Tuesday.

Among them are agreements on trade and economic cooperation, and on cooperation in the sphere of culture, science and education. The two sides also signed an agreement on production cooperation, a protocol on creating a Sakha-Kyrgyz trading center and an inter-departmental agreement on production cooperation between the Sakha Contract company and the Kyrgyz state-owned gold concern Kyrgyzzoloto.

Dzhumagulov told a news conference after the signing ceremony that during the talks the Kyrgyz side proposed "several directions for advantageous cooperation," to Nikolayev, for example, in the mining industry, the development of tin production and the joint production of rare metals. They also noted the possibility of joint development of water resources in Kyrgyzstan and the export of electric energy.

Among the main spheres of cooperation, the speakers noted Kyrgyzstan's delivery to Yakutia of vegetables and fruit. They also spoke about the possible holiday-making at Kyrgyz resorts of Yakutian residents.

Yakutia is also interested in further deliveries of antimony concentrate to the Kadanzhaisk metallurgical combine, which manufactures antimony meeting world standards. Under the interdepartmental agreement, Kyrgyzstan will receive 13-14 tonnes of antimony concentrate a year. It is planned that gold contained in the concentrate will be extracted in Kyrgyzstan and returned already pure to Yakutia.

Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyz, Kazakh Transit Deal With China, Pakistan

LD2405192196 Bishkek Kyrgyz Television Network in Russian 1430 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As the Foreign Affairs Ministry Press Service reports, a protocol has been signed in Bishkek on working out a mechanism for the implementation of a quadripartite agreement between the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, and

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China on transit. The sides agreed to start a pilot transit program through their territories in convoys of no more than 20 trucks from 5 October. They also decided to hold a working meeting of customs services experts in the first week of July in Islamabad with the participation of the relevant ministries and departments to elaborate an agreement on customs cooperation and passport and visa procedure for transit vehicles.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan: Karimov Visit to Azerbaijan, Georgia Previewed

LD2405200096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1639 GMT 24 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Islam Karimov is to start his visit to Azerbaijan on Monday [27 May].

An agreement on principles of trade-economic cooperation signed by Uzbekistan's and Azerbaijan's prime ministers in 1992 laid the ground for economic relations between the two republics, which only established official diplomatic relations in October 1995.

Karimov's upcoming visit to Baku will be the beginning of direct bilateral contacts in different spheres of life, experts from the Foreign Economic Relations Ministry told Interfax.

About 20 documents are supposed to be signed during Karimov's one-day visit. Among them are a declaration on friendship and cooperation, an agreement on principles of inter-state relations, protocols on relations between two foreign ministries and agreements regulating economic and social contacts.

Karimov is expected to come on an official visit to Georgia the same day. Tashkent has established rather close contacts with this country, experts say. Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze paid an official visit to Uzbekistan in September 1995.

As many as 19 agreements and treaties, including two political, 11 economic and six agreements on social relations were signed during this trip.

About 16 documents are supposed to be signed during Karimov's upcoming visit to Tbilisi, including an agreement on mutual encouragement and protection of investment, on cooperation between customs services, and agreement on railroad, aviation and automobile transport.

There are good prospects for further cooperation with Tbilisi, according to experts from the Economic Relations Ministry. Georgia offered its Black Sea ports, terminals and ships for transit of Uzbek goods and raw materials to Europe and other countries. In addition, the parties will consider joint utilization of Georgia's resort cities and sanatoriums.

Karimov's visit will last till May 29.

Uzbekistan: Uzbek, Tajik Prime Ministers Sign Agreement on Gold, Coal

LD2505192896 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Russian 1430 GMT 25 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan, headed by Prime Minister Yahyo Azimov arrived in our country today.

Since ancient times Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have been linked not only by common borders but also by centuries-long deep roots of cooperation in various activities. This has been given a new impetus since our countries gained independence, and the main task of today's meeting and talks at the Cabinet of Ministers is to raise our present mutually advantageous relationship to a higher level. The talks were chaired on the Uzbek side by Prime Minister Otkir Sultanov and on the Tajik side by Prime Minister Yahyo Azimov. The further development of economic cooperation in such fields as power generation, fuel and lubricants, mineral fertilizers, the establishment of a customs union, and other mutually advantageous projects were discussed.

An agreement was signed at the end of the talks by Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Sultanov and Prime Minister of Tajikistan Azimov on joint exploitation of the land at the Altyn-Tapkan deposits [gold and coal] on the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Uzbekistan: Government Acts To Avoid Grain Harvest Delays

LD2405143096 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 22 May 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "A Timely Interview: Bread Is the Stuff of Life"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The ears in the grain fields of Uzbekistan are thickening day by day. All the signs suggest that a good harvest is on the way, which cannot but cheer the farm workers. They achieved good sprouting of winter crops back in the autumn, fertilized the plants on time, and carried out other agricultural work. The grain cultures are growing well due to abundant rain. The harvest is now the priority, and the countdown has begun. What is currently being done on the farms to guarantee the timely harvesting of grain without losses? We asked Uzbek First Deputy Agriculture Minister Mansur Sultanov to tell about this.

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[Sultanov] A good grain harvest means enough to eat on our tables. The measures taken by the leadership of the country to guarantee grain self-sufficiency are begin to yield results, and this instills hopes that the target set will be reached. Areas sown to cereal crops have increased nearly 10-fold in the republic over the last three years. Because of the selfless works of the peasants, about 3 million tonnes of grain were produced for the first time in the history of Uzbekistan last year. Plans this year are even more substantial. At present 1.7 million hectares have been sown with such high-yield strains of wheat as Intensive, Sagzor-8, Yanbosh and Bezostaya-1, and such barley sorts as Karshi, Temur and Oykor. The grain farmers of Andizhan are sowing such wheat strains as Spartanka and Skifanka. Judging by the way the harvest is developing, the right grain strains were chosen.

This year the farmers of the republic face the task of obtaining 33 quintals of grain from each hectare of irrigated land and a minimum of 10 quintals from dry land. The decree by the president "On state support measures for agriculture" inspired the country folk to selfless labor. This document set the state order at only 50 percent of the harvest, and this significantly increases the peasants interest in the end results of their work. Moreover, farms were given advances against the forthcoming harvest at the beginning of the year. Making effective use of these possibilities, the grain farmers are paying great attention to the sowing campaign. Last year on the majority of grain lands 1.5 fertilizations took place per watering, and this season already it is two to three fertilizations, and grain plantations are now receiving their third watering. This work is being carried out with particular success in Andizhan, Dzhizak, Bukhara, Namangan and Tashkent regions.

[Question] It is no secret that a significant part of last year's harvest was lost because it was not gathered in time. What measures are being taken to prevent a repetition of last season's mistakes?

[Sultanov] Grain harvesting is responsible work. Unfortunately, the combine-harvesters did not work at full capacity in the fields last year. They were not repaired properly. As a result, the harvesting was not carried out in a timely manner. We had to bring in machinery and workers from neighboring republics. In certain districts machine operators taking part in the harvest received 10- 15 and sometimes even 20 percent of their wages in threshed grain. However, these conditions were for some reason not attractive to local machine operators.

They were mistaken in this, by the way. For example: last year the brothers Nuriddin and Burkhan Dzhurayev from the Navbahor District of Navoi Region received about five tonnes of grain and major money rewards for gathering and threshing wheat on 200 hectares. This year advanced machine operators have resolved to gather grain on 516 hectares at the Navruz collective farm.

Active preparation for the harvesting of grain is now being carried out in the republic. There are 7,687 combine-harvesters under repair. This [repair] work is 98 percent complete in Andizhan Region and 100 percent in Namangan Region. Commissions with representatives from local administrations are carrying out strict checks on each repaired piece of equipment in the localities. Combine-harvesters by the Case firm, imported from the United States of America, will start work in the fields for the first time this season. Six hundred machine operators and about 100 mechanical engineers have been trained to run this modern technology. Theoretical and practical classes have been carried out to this end at the Yangiyul Machine-Testing Station.

All present capacity will be used to gather the grain harvest from the fields on time and without losses. In particular, it is planned to use more than 1,000 combine-harvesters from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In turn the people of Uzbekistan will also help these neighbouring countries with their grain harvesting. The necessary measures are being taken both to provide regular transport and reliable storage of the harvest.

The peasants of our republic face another important task. About 1.2 million hectares of irrigated lands will soon be freed of the grain harvest. These lands must be ploughed without delay and sown to cotton, vegetables and fodder crops. Many farms last year sowed cotton on the fields freed of cereals, and received 20 quintals of raw cotton from each hectare.

It is the duty and honored task of the land-workers of the republic to gather the grain harvest, grown at the cost of such tense labor, on time and without losses. There can be no doubt that the granaries of the Homeland will be filled with a great store of grain.

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Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze Meets With Uzbek President, Discusses CIS

LD2805192096 Tbilisi BGI in Russian 1600 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During the meeting between the Georgian and Uzbek presidents, the two leaders briefed each other on the development of socioeconomic and political reforms in their countries. The presidents considered it expedient to get experts to look into the issue of establishing Uzbek-Georgian financial-production teams to deal with aircraft manufacturing, vehicle construction, machine building, and the establishment of favorable conditions for increasing goods turnover in the ports of Poti and Batumi.

Cooperation in the use of the Transcaucasian transit corridor may become a basis of the regions' integration.

Islam Karimov acquainted the Georgian president with the prospects of Uzbekistan's participation in a Central Asian economic space.

Eduard Shevardnadze acquainted Karimov with the prospects of Georgia's participation in the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. The meeting suggested that cooperation between the two regional structures should be considered as expedient.

Emphasizing special significance of complying with the memorandum on peace and stability signed in Almaty on 5 February 1995, the parties called on the CIS countries, in accordance with the spirit and letter of the document:

— Not to recognize nor to cooperate with separatist regimes, not to support forces fighting against the states from the territory of another state, and not to interfere in one another's internal affairs.
— To respect internationally recognized state borders and to oppose any encroachment upon their inviolability.
— To rule out the use of force in relations with one another or threats to use force as means of settling any disputes.
— To give utmost encouragement to peaceful settlement of any interstate or interregional discord.

President Karimov gave a high appraisal to the concept of a peaceful Caucasus intended to stabilize socioeconomic situation in the region and to revive the Caucasus.

The presidents paid special attention to processes under way in the CIS. Karimov and Shevardnadze agreed that there was no alternative to the CIS at present. A call was voiced to give a fresh incentive to the further development of the CIS. The presidents were unanimous in the opinion that it was interstate structures that had to be developed rather than structures standing above the states.

Georgia: Shevardnadze, Uzbekistan's Karimov Sign Integration Accords

LD2805185696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1501 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, May 28 (Interfax) — The Georgian and Uzbek presidents, Eduard Shevardnadze and Islam Karimov, signed a declaration on deeper integration between the two countries in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi on Tuesday, an Interfax correspondent reports.

Georgia and Uzbekistan also signed 15 bilateral treaties and agreements, including on legal assistance in civil and criminal matters, air communication and cooperation in the area of air transport, avoidance of double taxation, mutual assistance in customs matters and others.

Uzbekistan is interested in using Georgian sea ports for the transportation of cotton to Europe, the Uzbek delegation said during the visit. Georgia said it wanted to receive dividends from the Trans-Caucasian transit highway and receive the reputation of a country with a reliable transport network.

Uzbekistan will begin supplying Georgia with 2,000 tonnes of cotton fiber a month on a compensatory basis. This will allow Georgia to ensure the operation of its light industry.

The two countries also agreed to cooperate in the creation of ferry communication between the Georgian port of Poti and the Bulgarian port of Burgas. Uzbekistan is expected to invest in the construction of storage facilities "that Georgian ports obviously lack," Karimov said.

Relations between Georgia and Uzbekistan are developing at a quick pace and are dynamic, Shevardnadze said at a news conference on Tuesday.

Karimov told the news conference that Uzbekistan was satisfied with the opportunity to export its production via the Trans-Caucasian highway. This route is more beneficial than others both in terms of delivery time and cost, he said. The first shipment of Uzbek cotton reached Poti after three and a half days, Karimov said.

Regarding the Moscow agreement on an end to combat actions in Chechnya, the two presidents said they had always favored a peaceful settlement of the Chechen problem. If the Chechen conflict is settled, this will

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accelerate the settlement of the Abkhazian conflict, Shevardnadze said.

Karimov and Shevardnadze also expressed support for Russian reforms, which are "leading to peace, stability and democracy" in Russia. Karimov praised incumbent Russian President Boris Yeltsin as the most worthy candidate for the Russian presidency. "It's not all about sympathy and antipathy. The point is that he is the only one who now can actively confront the Communist revanche," said Karimov.

Georgia: Details of Agreements With Uzbekistan

LD2805211996 Tbilisi BGI in Russian 1600 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received] — The following documents were signed by the Governments of Uzbekistan and Georgia:

1. The agreement on legal aid and legal relations in civil and criminal cases.
2. The agreement on extradition of convicts to serve their prison terms within the country of which they are citizens.
3. The agreement on air communication and cooperation in the sphere of air transport.
4. The agreement on the basic principles of setting up financial-production teams.
5. The agreement on cooperation in the spheres of standardization, metrology and certification.
6. The agreement on cooperation in protecting industrial property.
7. The agreement on cooperation in geodesy, cartography, and geographical information.
8. The agreement on guaranteeing the rights of citizens for pensions.
9. The agreement on nontrade payments.
10. The agreement on mutual cooperation in postal money transfers.
11. The convention on avoiding double taxation and preventing the evasion of income and property tax payments.
12. The agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs services.
13. The agreement on cooperation in combating smuggling and other infringements of customs regulations.
14. The protocol on the exchange of methods and information in the spheres of customs statistics and foreign trade.
15. The agreement on converting the debt for 1992 into the state credit of the Government of Uzbekistan to the Government of Georgia.

Georgia: Islamic Fundamentalist Literature Seized in Tbilisi

LD2805161896 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 0910 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 28 May — Law enforcement authorities have discovered literature of an Islamic fundamentalist nature from Turkey in a warehouse in Tbilisi. The warehouse was sealed.

An investigation is under way to identify the owners of the literature. According to preliminary information, it belongs to a Turkish firm operating in Tbilisi.

Georgia: Parliament Issues Decree on Implementation of Land Law

AU2805120596 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 15 May 96 p 3

["Decree of the Georgian parliament on the Implementation of the Law 'On the Ownership of Land for Agricultural Use'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Georgian parliament decrees:

1. To implement the Georgian Law "On the Ownership of Land for Agricultural Use" following the adoption of the law stipulated in Paragraph 6 of this decree and the implementation of the measures stipulated in Paragraphs 10 and 11.
2. In accordance with the requirements laid down in the decrees of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 48 of 18 January 1992, No. 128 of 6 February 1992, No. 290 of 10 March 1992, No. 949 of 22 September 1992, No. 39 of 16 January 1993, No. 148 of 24 February 1993, No. 503 of 28 June 1993, No. 815 of 29 November 1994, and No. 129 of 10 March 1995, the Decree of the Republic of Georgia State Council of 21 October 1992, the Directive of the Georgian Head of State No. 249 of 30 December 1994, the Edict of the Georgian President No. 45 of 22 February 1995, and his edict No. 166 of 11 February 1996, plots of land allotted to households and Georgian citizens and also gardens, kitchen gardens, plots attached to summer cottages, and communal and individual plots used by them legally up to 1992 are declared to be their private property and the Law "On the Ownership of Land for Agricultural Use" applies to them.
3. Plots of land that, in accordance with the normative acts stipulated in Paragraph 2 of this decree, belong to households (families), but that have not been transferred to the owners according to the established procedure and size, are to be transferred free of charge to their ownership within one year following the adoption of this law.

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4. Households (families) of workers living in a rural area and attached to the spheres of medicine, education, and culture are equated with households living in the country and engaged in agriculture and plots of land are allocated to them as far as possible in the corresponding administrative unit according to the norm determined for the first category.
5. The right of ownership does not extend to the lands of those households who have received (appropriated) any plot of land in violation of the aforementioned normative acts.
6. In accordance with the normative acts stipulated in Paragraph 2, following the transfer of plots of agricultural land to the ownership of citizens, land use and relations governing the ownership of the remaining agricultural lands are regulated by the corresponding law. To entrust the Georgian parliament Committee for Agrarian Questions to present the bill that has been mentioned to parliament for discussion by 1 August 1996.
7. The rules governing the use of agricultural land in the border or coastal strip and in the border zone are determined by a special law.
8. The rules governing the use of land in zones established with the aim of ensuring the protection of historical, archaeological, and urban monuments and monumental art and also on plots of land transferred to the Georgian Orthodox Church are regulated by the law.
9. Acts connected with the legal status of lands received by separatist structures that temporarily control a part of the territory of Georgia are invalid.
10. The Georgian government will ensure the implementation of financial and organizational and methodological measures necessary for the observance of this law.
11. To create a land fund accountable to parliament.
12. The Committee for Agrarian Questions is to draw up and present to parliament for discussion changes and additions to the Republic of Georgia Law "On Mortgage" in connection with the adoption of this law.
13. The transfer into private ownership of lands for agricultural use can be carried out both all at once and by stages in separate regions in accordance with the registration of the owners of the land and the preparedness of the land-cadaster service. At the same time, to receive the document confirming ownership of the land, it is essential that the owner has signed the Georgian citizen's declaration determined by Georgian legislation, confirming that he recognizes it.
[Signed] Zurab Zhvania, chairman of the Georgian parliament
[Dated] Tbilisi, 22 March 1996

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Estonia

Estonia: Meri on NATO Enlargement, Russian Relations

MS2905094096 London INDEPENDENT in English 29 May 96 p 10

[Report by Adrian Bridge including remarks by Estonian President Lennart Meri; in Tallinn, date not given: "Estonia Seeks Shelter From Icy Eastern Wind"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Among the many careful framed maps adorning the wall of the Estonian Preside Lennart Meri's Tallinn study, one in particular catches the eye. It depicts the Baltic region in the 17th century when the Swedes were at the height of their power and when the boundaries of Estonia stretched far inside what is today Russia. "It is a wonderful map, but I always try to stand in front of it whenever the Russian ambassador comes to visit," jokes Mr Meri.

Joking apart, much of Mr Meri's time is spent thinking about the almost permanently strained relations between Moscow and Tallinn and about how — and whether — they can ever be repaired. There does not, he concedes, appear to be any immediate prospect of a thaw. Indeed, in the run up to next month's presidential election in Russia, Estonia seems to have been transformed into a whipping boy for Russian politicians anxious to prove their nationalist credentials, a prime target for Moscow's ire.

Quite apart from the usual objections over what it terms human-rights violations against ethnic Russians living in Estonia, Moscow recently claimed it had evidence that members of a volunteer defence force in Estonia had been selling arms to the IRA. Shortly afterwards, the two countries were plunged into a mini version of the spy row between Russia and Britain, which ended with both Moscow and Tallinn expelling one diplomat apiece.

"In any election campaign one must always be careful to separate the electoral rhetoric from the real political substance," Mr Meri says. "But there is no doubt that there has been a sharp increase in the level of hostility coming from Russian politicians towards the Baltic states and especially Estonia."

While Estonian defence officials quickly denied the IRA arms sales charges, many in Tallinn interpreted them as yet another attempt to damage Estonia's international image. As the most economically successful of the three Baltic states, some even saw the move as a deliberate attempt to deter the many western firms seeking to join those who have already invested here.

Mr Meri puts it more diplomatically. "We are a small state, but in our five years of independence we have successfully established a parliamentary system and built a free market economy," he says. "We have been able to do things that Russia has not been able to do. Somehow that undermines the prestige of the Russian leadership. And that is the real reason why Russia has invested so much effort in trying to show Estonia in an appalling light."

Mr Meri personally has good reason to feel wary of Moscow. As an 11-year-old boy, he experienced the annexation of his country by Stalin's Red Army in 1940 and then, one year later, faced the horror of deportation to Siberia — a fate shared by tens of thousands of his countrymen.

In his eagerness to ensure that nothing like it could ever happen again, Mr Meri has become one of the most ardent champions of Estonia's drive to join the European Union and, above all, NATO. A well read and travelled man, the Estonia President, now 67, has long since made his mark in the international arena as someone who brings a refreshing new perspective and tone to the EU and Nato enlargement debates.

When NATO originally proposed its Partnership for Peace programme in 1993, he compared it to a used bottle of Chanel perfume: "Nice to look at, but empty". On suggestion that, given the strength of Russian opposition, the Baltic states might have to accept some thing less than full NATO membership, he once famously quipped: "Security is like virginity: you're either a virgin or you are not. You either have security or you don't."

In a couple of hard-hitting speeches in Brussels recently Mr Meri castigated western officials for showing too much caution over admitting new members from the east. Declaring that the "dream of Europe is fading", he accused the West of "failing to take a full breath of the winds of change in central Europe: all it has done is smell them cautiously, as you would chemicals."

One look out of the window towards Russia and the east reminds him of the scale of the problems facing Estonia, the smallest of the three Baltic states with a population of just 1.5 million. "In 1991 there was a tremendous wave of idealism in Russia but the west somehow took it for granted that democracy would spread to it, rather like a meteorological phenomenon, of its own accord. We lost a lot of valuable time in which we could have helped the Russians implement a genuinely democratic society."

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Estonia: U.S. Senator Discusses NATO Expansion With Officials

LD2805140496 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1200 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] U.S. Republican Senator Richard Lugar has been visiting Estonia. Here is Kai Vare with details:

[Vare] Richard Lugar is the chairman of both the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the one on European Affairs in the U.S. Senate. Riigikogu Speaker Toomas Savi highlighted Richard Lugar's major role in concluding key agreements on weapons and on nuclear controls. During his meeting with President Lennart Meri, Foreign Minister Siim Kallas, and Toomas Savi the discussions focused first of all on the expansion of NATO. The Republican side in the Senate is not satisfied with the speed of NATO expansion. According to Senator Lugar, it must be discussed how to launch and conduct talks on Estonia joining NATO and this is one of the reasons for his presence here:.

[Begin Lugar recording in English fading to Estonian translation] [passage omitted] The population of Estonia must understand that NATO's expansion will entail further obligations and expense. This is a subject for discussion also in the United States. In the opinion of the United States, no so-called gray area must be created in Europe. Estonia will be able to join also the European economic and security institutions. [end recording]

Richard Lugar noted that he is not familiar with the details of Estonian-NATO talks but emphasized that the countries wishing to join NATO must add something to NATO's security. Joining NATO does not mean solely acquiring NATO's protection.

According to Toomas Savi, Senator Lugar was interested in how Estonia will be able to generate security:

[Begin Savi recording] The debate about whether Estonia will be able to double its defense expenditure in the next year's state budget serves as an example of us preparing to join the NATO structures. And undoubtedly, there is debate in progress simultaneously at a number of levels, starting from Brussels only a week ago which was the first hearing, so to speak, down to the example I gave here today, of the Baltic presidents and the Baltic countries' defense ministers meeting today, and there are also Nordic defense ministers attending. These things are all but on the same subject: that is security and (?each country's) defense capability. [end recording]

Estonia: Senator Lugar Favors Estonia Joining European Bodies

WS2905084096 Tallinn BNS in English 1605 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, May 28, BNS — The United States considers no grey zone must be permitted to be formed in Europe and Estonia must be reserved the opportunity to join European security organizations, a leading U.S. senator, Richard G. Lugar, said on Tuesday in Tallinn.

Lugar (64) told a press conference that the United States was convinced no grey zones must be permitted to be created in Europe and Estonia must have the opportunity to join European security and economic institutions.

"Talks on those issues are in progress and they may continue for years, but this is what we must achieve," Lugar said.

The leading Republican senator said that besides guarantees to each acceeding country's security, accession to NATO would also involveg costs and obligations in both political and technical terms. He said accession to NATO did not mean only to receive protection, but also to offer protection to others.

The senator said that Estonia could develop closer relations both with individual U.S. states and the U.S. National Guard.

Meeting with the Estonian parliament's Speaker, Toomas Savi, heads of the parliament's foreign affairs committee, Eino Tamm, and of the state defense committee, Peeter Lorents, as well as chairman of the Estonian-United States parliamentary group, Mart Laar, Lugar said that in matters of NATO expansion, the United States proceeded from its own security interests.

The senator said the adoption of new member states by NATO should be promoted in every way.

On Tuesday Lugar also met with the Estonian Foreign Minister, Siim Kallas. The issues discussed concerned agriculture and protective trade tariffs as well as general economic problems, the Foreign Ministry press spokesman told BNS.

"Economic contacts form a support to political and defense links," the senator said.

Lugar expressed recognition to Estonia for having avoided subsidies to agriculture and establishment of protective customs tariffs. "This is unique, and also the United States is moving in that direction," said Lugar, who chairs the U.S. Senate agricultural committee.

The senator also expressed his satisfaction at increasing U.S. investments into the Estonian economy.

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Tallinn, where Richard G. Lugar arrived on Monday from Brussels and which he will leave on Tuesday, is the second spot on the senator's European tour. Other countries to be visited during his tour are Lithuania, Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic. On Monday Lugar met with the Estonian President, Lennart Meri.

Lugar, a U.S. senator since 1976, is a prominent member of several powerful U.S. Senate Committees, including the Foreign Relations Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Estonia: Agreement With Norway To Send 130 Peacekeepers to Lebanon

LD2605185796 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1700 GMT 26 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Estonia and Norway have reached an agreement to send an Estonian peacekeeping company to a peacekeeping mission in south Lebanon.

Margus Kolga, a deputy chancellor of the Defense Ministry, said that in October, 130 Estonians who have received their training in the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion will be sent to a peacekeeping mission in south Lebanon as part of Norwegian troops.

This is the first Estonian unit at the level of company to be sent out a with UN peacekeeping mission. Previously, only smaller groups of Estonian serviceman have taken part in peacekeeping missions.

Estonia: Parliamentary Official Views Para-Military Incident

LD2805134796 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1200 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Gunnar Paal has asked Eino Tamm, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission in the Riigikogu to comment on the activity of the Kaitseliit's [defense league, part of Estonian Defense Force] Tartu unit at the Agricultural University yesterday and how this will affect Estonia's international reputation.

[Begin recording] [Paal] Eino Tamm, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission, What are your thoughts after the events concerning the Kaitseliit in Tartu?

[Tamm] Well, it is one of the characteristics of a state that there is order in it, with the military structures doing the jobs entrusted to them. And if it is a democratic state, then there is also democratic control over the defense forces. Of course, the Kaitseliit does not fully qualify as an army, but it is an armed organization in any case and in this sense any kind of disobedience or overstepping laws by an armed organization is something highly negative. I am fully convinced that those countries not well disposed towards Estonia are overjoyed and those countries well disposed towards Estonia who observe our development with sympathy are perhaps sad like ourselves.

[Paal] How much talk has there been about internal stability in a country at international meetings, conferences, and discussions?

[Tamm] Estonia has all along been cited rather as an example in this respect. But indeed, the Russian press and some official Russian sources have knowingly mentioned the Kaitseliit as an aggressive and militaristic set-up here in Estonia, with attitudes towards it being far from positive. And I can imagine what a pleasure this is when Estonia creates such precedents itself and demonstrates that this is indeed a disobedient organization. This acts as grist to the mill of the Russians.

[Paal] But these problems must be talked through honestly and straightforwardly and an evaluation at the state level must be provided. Otherwise the Estonian international reputation will be harmed.

[Tamm] Yes, definitely. Looking at it at a general level the scandals we and our own state bodies have discovered and eliminated demonstrate in fact our country's strength and its democratic character. But naturally, alongside this it is possible to manipulate this and show that we do have conflicts and shortcomings recognized by our own state departments. Persons who want to evaluate can pick out only those and create a negative picture of our affairs while in fact I think we are talking about the country's strength since we are able to resolve matters and gradually uproot such negative phenomena. [end recording]

Latvia

Latvia: Ulmanis Previews Baltic Summit Problems, Topics

WS2805081296 Tallinn BNS in English 1817 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riga, May 27, BNS — The Baltic states should not compete, but step up cooperation which would promote their joining the European Union and NATO, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis told a press conference on Monday before leaving for Vilnius.

"The childish rivalry should be stopped, and none of the Baltic states should try to be inferior over the others," said the Latvian president.

Ulmanis noted that dangerous tendencies can be currently observed in the Baltic states — each of them is

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trying to isolate itself, and establish cooperation with other states.

He failed to say which of the Baltic states is a "scapegoat," adding that the Baltic presidents will discuss the issue tomorrow.

Presidents of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania plan to tackle the Baltic cooperation and unity issues in Vilnius. Ulmanis emphasized that by unity must be understood the Baltic states' common goals, but cooperation has to be carried out in different branches.

"We have to take up practical activities instead of cherishing illusions about unity," concluded Ulmanis.

He said that the Baltic presidents will also discuss their countries' integration into EU and NATO, interior policy as well as "understanding of the unity and cooperation."

During the meeting, the presidents will sign a common declaration. Latvia and Estonia will also possibly sign an agreement on social issues, said Ulmanis.

[Tallinn BNS in English at 2128 GMT on 27 May adds: "Superiority of the Western system of values will be proved if Russia agrees to the Baltic countries' admission to the European Union and NATO, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis told a press conference on Monday.

["'Russia's consent to the Baltic countries' joining NATO and EU will show if the West has won the cold war and if the Western system of values has turned out to be more convincing that the communistic one," said Ulmanis. He said that now the West European countries have a chance to prove what they can do in this respect by deciding where in the European geographical area has to be the place for the three Baltic states. Ulmanis said that the Baltic countries have to present themselves as 'the strategic element of the Euroatlantic space.']

Latvia: Ulmanis Urges End to Competition Between Baltic States

LD2705163196 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Baltic states should stop competing with each other and should develop normal cooperation which would facilitate joining the European Union and NATO, State President Guntis Ulmanis told a news conference today before his departure for Vilnius.

The presidents will have to discuss in Vilnius both cooperation between the Baltic states and their unity. The presidents will sign a joint declaration at the meeting. It is possible that Latvia and Estonia will sign an agreement on social issues.

Latvia: Parliamentary Delegation Head Sums Up Recent Visit to Russia

LD2705171796 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1300 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputies of the Latvian Saeima [parliament] who are members of the Latvian-Russian parliamentary cooperation group and who returned from a three-day visit to Russia at the end of last week have said Russia should not be ignored.

Janis Jurkans, head of the delegation, told a news conference today about the most important conclusions.

[Begin recording] [Jurkans] All political forces unambiguously attested to the unquestionableness of Latvian independence. The main objections, which are shared by everyone in the Russian side and which can seriously complicate future cooperation with Russia, are the following: the problem of the Russian-speakers in Latvia; the different economic, political, and social rights for citizens and non-citizens; and Latvia's attempts to join NATO.

During meetings with representatives of the Communist Party and members of the Power to the People Bloc, we listened a lot. Complaints were made about the imprisonment of Mr. Rubiks [former leader of the Latvian Communist Party] and trials that concern people who have allegedly actively worked in the Communist Party since 13 January 1991.

Russia does not have a properly worked-out policy toward the Baltic states; neither have the Russians, as I understand it, given real aid to or had interest in Russian people who live in Latvia, because if we compare it with German structures in Latvia — we have all sorts of funds and special funds and there is the Swedish School of Economics and the Danish Cultural Institute — the Russians have nothing here. [end recording]

Latvia: Russian Duma Said Against Latvian Ethnic Policy, NATO Expansion

LD2405142496 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1300 GMT 24 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputies of the Russian State Duma are unanimously negative on the problem of Latvia's Russian speakers and the NATO expansion issue, said Janis Jurkans, the chairman of the Saeima [parliament] Russian parliament support group [as heard], on his return from a visit to Moscow. In all talks between deputies of the two countries, Russian representatives stated that they will not allow the eastward expansion of the NATO. Jurkans was most shocked by the fact that (?there was such a negative attitude) to Latvia in Russia.

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Latvia: Army Commander Says Latvia Helpless Against Russian Invasion

LD2705143296 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1200 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Latvian army would not be able to hold out in battle for long if a Russian assault landing division invaded the country. Juris Dalbins, commander of the Latvian National Armed Forces, (?expressed) this view in an interview with the NEATKARIGA RITA AVIZE newspaper. He considers the experience of the Chechen fighters as very important, and (?he understands) that Latvia would use similar tactics in the event of invasion.

Dalbins acknowledged that Latvia does not at present have enough efficient weapons. If Latvia had individual rocket antiaircraft weapons, then this would cause the enemy substantial problems, the commander of the national armed forces says.

Latvia: Ulmanis Says Admission to NATO Will Prove West Won Cold War

LD2805203096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1619 GMT 28 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] President Guntis Ulmanis believes that "depending on whether or not Russia will agree to the Baltic states' membership in NATO, it will become clear whether the West has won the cold war and whether the western values are more convincing that the communist ones."

He made this statement during a press conference in Riga Monday [27 May], in connection with the talks between the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian president which began in Vilnius Tuesday. In his estimate, the question of the Baltic states' admission to the EU and NATO "has acquired serious importance lately." "Therefore, we (the leaders of the three Baltic states) must convince the West that they have a big stake in reaffirming their belief that the Baltic countries are part of the Western community, and should demonstrate what this community should be like and what role the Baltic region plays in Europe."

He said that the summit will concentrate on the Baltic countries' integration with the European organizations.

"I will share with my colleagues the idea that the Baltic countries must become a strategic element of the European-trans-Atlantic community," said Ulmanis.

He also emphasized that the three Baltic states must stop competing with each other and start normal cooperation. "We must stop this childish rivalry. None of the Baltic countries should place itself higher than the others or try to score points at the others' expense," he said.

He pointed out that "dangerous tendencies of isolation and alienation, whereby each country is trying to establish relations with other states on its own, are making themselves felt."

He did not say which of the three states has excelled the other two in doing so.

He told reporters that he will remain on the political scene whatever the results of the presidential elections (his term expires on July 7).

Speaking about the invitation to join the CIS, he said that Russia will not repeat its invitation in the future seeing Riga's strenuous efforts to get admitted to NATO and the European Union.

He said that Latvia will broaden its relations with the CIS countries on a bilateral basis and referred to his recent visit to Uzbekistan as an example.

He announced that he had met with the parliamentary faction of the Fatherland and Freedom party on Monday.

"I told the deputies that irrespective of the results of the presidential elections, I can use my experience to the benefit of the state, working in a party or doing some official state work," he said.

According to Interfax sources, the deputies representing the Fatherland and Freedom party criticized Ulmanis's performance as Latvian president.

Ulmanis noted, however, that "there were no hostile notes in the tonality of the deputies' statements."

The Fatherland and Freedom faction is the only one in the Latvian parliament that has held talks with the three most probable candidates to the presidential post: Guntis Ulmanis, Ilga Kreituse and Imant Liepa. This party does not consider former Communist Party leader Alfreds Rubiks was, who is serving a term for attempting to organize a state coup, to be a likely candidate.

Faction chairman Janis Straume stated on Monday that his party will name its candidate in the middle of June.

There are 14 deputies in the faction. Presently, 33 deputies are determined to support Ulmanis during the presidential elections.

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Lithuania

Lithuania: Defense Minister Comments on Meeting With Perry

LD2305212196 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 1900 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lithuanian Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius says the United States supports Lithuania's position that all NATO partner countries should be invited to integrate to the alliance at the same time.

Linkevicius met the U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry on 22 May. He said after the meeting that the question of when Lithuania will become a NATO member will be answered by the country's readiness for integration.

However, he said that when the NATO expansion process had started, Lithuania must be told exclusively that it will be admitted and will not be left overboard. Perry told the Lithuanian defense minister that he understood Lithuania's ambition and will try to support best, the Baltic News Service reports. [sentence as heard]

The U.S. defense secretary said he could not speak on behalf of all the whole organization made up of 16 members, but that the United States was inclined to help the Baltic countries. Linkevicius said he got a very warm welcome in the Pentagon on Wednesday.

The U.S. Congress passed a decision this week to grant to the Lithuanian Army charity $12 million. The aid will include telecommunications equipment, uniforms, and medicines from U.S. units that are winding up their service in Europe.

Lithuania: Reaction to U.S. Deportation of War Crimes Suspect Cited

WS2805081096 Tallinn BNS in English 1817 GMT 27 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, May 27, BNS — Lithuanian officials have little doubts about the deportation of Aleksandras Lileikis, an American Lithuanian suspected of war crimes.

The Baltic country has nearly completed investigation into the Lileikis' wartime activities.

A U.S. court stripped the 88-year old pensioner of the American citizenship last Friday. Lileikis now faces deportation — most probably to Lithuania, where he committed the suspected crimes against humanity.

"If he is deported, we will take him," chief prosecutor of the Special Investigation Department of the Prosecutor General's Office, Vidmantas Vaicekauskas, told BNS.

Lithuania cannot request handover of a war criminal because it does not have an extradition treaty with the United States.

The Prosecutor General's Office has opened a file to investigate Lileikis' activities as head of the Vilnius area secret police in Lithuania under Nazi occupation.

Vaicekauskas said the case is nearly finished but refused to comment on its likely conclusions until the investigation is still underway.

"There is not a single living eyewitness or victim and we could not interrogate Lileikis himself. Everything is based on documentation," the prosecutor said, adding that the authenticity of documents is still to be proved.

Sources in the prosecutor's office and justice ministry said director of the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, Eli M. Rosenbaum, is expected to arrive in Lithuania in June.

Head of the agency which prepared the denaturalization file against Lileikis is coming to Vilnius to continue his work.

"Most probably, he will press us to take Lileikis," a senior ministry official told BNS.

Rosenbaum has been to Vilnius before his appointment as director of the Special Investigation Office. He found then in Lithuanian archives a lot of evidence against Lileikis and other Lithuanian Nazi collaborators.

Lileikis, a former printer, still lives in his home in Norwood, Massachusetts. He has the right to appeal the court's ruling in 60 days.

The U.S. court said Lileikis played a key role in the mass annihilation of Jews in Lithuania in 1941-44.

According to wartime documents, he signed orders to put Jews into a prison and to turn them later over to the Nazis.

Vilnius had one of Europe's largest Jewish communities before World War II, which was almost completely destroyed during the Nazi occupation.

Lithuania: Russia Not To Observe 'Calmly' Baltics Joining NATO

LD2305203796 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1600 GMT 23 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Baltic states are the only states aspiring for NATO membership that can be apprehensive of Russia because of historic circumstances. If NATO expands and the Baltic states apply for membership, Russia will not observe this calmly, Seimas member Saulius Peceliunas said, quoting the Russian

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representatives as saying at the spring session of the North Atlantic Assembly that was held in Athens 16-20 May.

A wide discussion was held at the session on the possibility of the Baltic states joining NATO, ELTA reported.

According to Saulius Peceliunas, Russian politicians have clearly demonstrated at the session that the Baltic states are the sphere of Russia's interests and that Russia is not prepared to lose it.

Being aware of the experience of the historic relations with this big state, one can imagine what the Russian threats like "will not observe this calmly" could mean, the Seimas member maintained, speaking at a news conference held at the Seimas today.

Saulius Peceliunas, head of the Lithuanian delegation at the session, said that the NATO leadership was of the opinion that all the states aspiring for NATO membership should join the alliance simultaneously.

Lithuania: Baltic Presidents Begin Talks in Vilnius

LD2805172796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1217 GMT 28 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, May 28 (Interfax) — A two-day meeting of the presidents of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia began in the Lithuaninan capital of Vilnius on Tuesday afternoon.

Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis, Estonian President Lennart Meri and their delegations have been conducting talks for more than four hours, a spokesman for the Lithuanion presidential press service has told Interfax. After they sign a joint statement and some other documents, the presidents will grant a news conference.

The Lithuanian president's foreign policy aide, Justas Paleckis, told Interfax earlier that cooperation between the Baltic countries will be the main issue under discussion.

In addition, it is planned to discuss relations with neighboring countries, first of all, with Russia due to the forthcoming presidential elections.

The negotiators will also focus their attention on promoting cooperation with European, trans-Atlantic and regional structures.

Lithuania: President Brazauskas Notes Desire To Join NATO, EU

LD2805192896 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1430 GMT 28 May 96

[Statement by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas at a news conference in Vilnius following his meeting with the presidents of Latvia and Estonia — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ladies and gentlemen, Messrs. Presidents. It is the first time that this official meeting of the presidents of the three Baltic countries is being held in accordance with our agreed procedure. And I would like to point out that it is already the second time that this meeting is being held in Lithuania: Two years ago we met in Palanga. This time we are meeting in Vilnius.

Each time, these meetings have some new topics. This time, along with our common priority goals, the global goals of our three states, we expressed our will, our opinion, the will and opinion of three presidents, also on the issues which have attracted specific attention lately. We expressed our opinion in the documents which we have just signed and you were witnesses to the signing procedure. And there is another document, it is called communique. It is of a more general nature. It covers not only our foreign policies and our foreign policy point of view, but also our internal trilateral relations. It lists our trilateral internal problems and directions for our activity. As presidents, we highlighted certain areas of interest for our states and governments — state border matters, joining NATO, and preparations for joining NATO. [passage indistinct]

We also discussed issues of the state border, the border between our countries, our eastern border, the problems which exist there and what is to be done, what is to be achieved.

Naturally, we devoted considerable attention to our integration with the European structures, i.e., with the European Union. We experessed a very clear idea that integration into the European Union and NATO should not happen out of fear or pressure from some third countries. It is our deep belief and our firm determination that only this way is acceptable to us and only this way will guarantee the well-being of our nations and our countries in the future [words indistinct] and will significantly increase security guarantees for our countries. This is our motivation for striving to achieve this goal.

I would not like my opening statement to be too long. I hope you will have questions, and now I would like to suggest that Messrs Presidents take over. [remaining of relay indistinct]

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Lithuania: Latvian President on Partnership at Baltic Summit

LD2905114096 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0902 GMT 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The presidents of the Baltic states, Guntis Ulmanis, Lennart Meri and Algirdas Brazauskas, were in cenference in Vilnius to discuss integration into the European Union and NATO. The Baltic presidents held a news conference after signing a joint communique.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] We must be much more active in implementing programs which have been drafted by each country individually. We must implement this proposition of ours — Partnership for Integration. And this partnership should express itself in two aspects: one is security which is NATO, and the second is prosperity which is the European Union.

I am convinced that the disagreements over borders, customs and other issues should not be dramatised and [words indistinct] in tackling these problems all the three countries are establishing the basis for the Baltics as a common region. [end recording]

Guntis Ulmanis stressed that the borders between the Baltic states would have a symbolic meaning in time, and that disputes which have recently occurred over the maritime border would soon be settled.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] I believe that it will not be long before the borders between the three Baltic states become purely nominal. As European countries, we will also observe all the traditions of the European countries that are members of the European Union, operating according to the principles of the Schengen agreement. [end recording]

Journalists also asked the presidents of each country how in their opinion would Russia's political attitude towards the Baltic states change if nondemocratic forces come to power in Russia? Brazauskas, Meri and Ulmanis said they were confident that the Baltics have already managed to (?consolidate) their external security and defense.

[Begin Ulmanis recording] There is one clause in the declaration which directly answers this question. However Europe and Russia have progressed so far that security is not so dependent on one or another person coming to power that could lead to a cardinal change of European, Russian and American policy. Therefore we believe that the security policy which is being shaped by transatlantic structures and Europe — and which now also involves Baltic efforts — will not change because of who will come to power in Russia. [end recording]

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